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LEADER–FOLLOWER UNITY: A GROUNDED THEORY BASED ON
PERCEPTIONS OF LEADERSHIP AND FOLLOWERSHIP
EXPERTS IN THE UNITED STATES

by

EVGENIA V. PRILIPKO

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the School of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF THE INCARNATE WORD

May 2014

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Evgenia Valeryevna Prilipko

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Evgenia V. Prilipko

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my beloved parents and family who humbly remain the most hardworking individuals and role models in my life. Your endless love and support made me who I am now and made this work possible.

LEADER–FOLLOWER UNITY: A GROUNDED THEORY BASED ON
PERCEPTIONS OF LEADERSHIP AND FOLLOWERSHIP
EXPERTS IN THE UNITED STATES

Evgenia V. Prilipko, Ph.D.

University of the Incarnate Word, 2014

Leaders and followers are equally important for organizational success and development. While leadership training is widely available, very few training sessions and courses are offered on cultivating follower skills. It is essential to educate and transform individuals to become effective followers.

This study identifies the most important characteristics to be exhibited by individuals in the follower role as perceived by followership and leadership experts in the United States. The theoretical framework used for this study is 12 follower attributes proposed by Antelo, Henderson, and St. Clair (2010). Seven scholars were interviewed: Ira Chaleff, Dr. Joanne Ciulla, Dr. Gene Dixon, Dr. Barbara Kellerman, Dr. Rob Koonce, Dr. Jean Lipman-Blumen, and Dr. Ron Riggio.

The grounded theory constructed as a result of the study reveals that (a) scarcity of followership courses in academic curricula can be explained by the negative stereotype of the term *follower* prevalent in the Western society, (b) follower skills can be taught, (c) followership should be taught every time leadership is taught at academic levels ranging from high school to post graduate, and (d) 17 follower attributes are suggested for the purpose of teaching individuals.

A taxonomy of leadership theories with the follower component is developed to acknowledge the presence of followers in the leadership process. For the first time, the

model of Leader–Follower Unity is proposed to portray an individual’s ability to act as a follower and a leader. The importance of teaching from a Leader-Follower Unity standpoint that integrates the roles of leaders and followers is addressed. An implementation of a Leader–Follower course that teaches the identified follower attributes is suggested.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	iii
List of Tables.....	xiii
List of Figures.....	xiv
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Context of the Study.....	1
Definition of Terms.....	9
Problem Statement.....	11
Purpose Statement and Research Questions.....	12
Theoretical Framework.....	12
Significance.....	14
Limitations of the Study.....	15
Summary.....	15
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	17
Introduction.....	17
Origin and History of the Term.....	18
Escalation of Followership in the Literature through the Years.....	18
Leadership and Followership as Inseparable Units.....	20
Prilipko's Taxonomy of Leadership Theories with the Follower Component.....	22
Formal Theory of Followership.....	25
Resistance to Followership and Negative Connotations of the Term.....	26
Alternatives to the Term Follower.....	30
Various Views on Followership.....	31

James M. Burns.....	31
John W. Gardner.....	31
Joseph C. Rost.....	32
Edwin P. Hollander.....	33
Robert E. Kelley.....	34
Barbara Kellerman.....	35
Susan Baker.....	36
Ira Chaleff: Courageous Followership.....	38
Mark Van Vugt: Evolutionary Perspective.....	39
Similarity of Leader and Follower Attributes	40
“Leadership Industry”.....	41
Scarcity of Followership Courses.....	42
Conclusion.....	44
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY.....	46
Importance of This Research.....	46
Research Strategy.....	47
Research Design.....	51
Population and Sample.....	57
Protection of Human Subjects and Ethical Consideration.....	58
Data Collection Procedures.....	59
Data Analysis Procedures.....	61
Role of the Researcher.....	63
Credibility, Validity, Reliability.....	64
Summary.....	66
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS.....	67
Introduction.....	67
Setting and Data Collection.....	67
Participants.....	68
Rob Koonce.....	69

Jean Lipman-Blumen.....	70
Ira Chaleff.....	71
Ron Riggio.....	72
Joanne Ciulla.....	73
Gene Dixon.....	73
Barbara Kellerman.....	74
Process of Data Analysis.....	75
Emergent Themes.....	79
Emergent Theme 1.....	80
Emergent Theme 2.....	81
Emergent Theme 3.....	83
Emergent Theme 4.....	85
Emergent Theme 5.....	87
Outliers of the Study.....	88
Expert Opinions Received in Relation to the List of Follower Attributes.....	92
Summary of the Grounded Theory	102
Establishing Credibility/Trustworthiness of Qualitative Data.....	103
Chapter Summary.....	106
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION.....	109
Interpretation.....	109
Interpretation of Emergent Theme 1.....	110
Interpretation of Emergent Theme 2.....	110
Interpretation of Emergent Theme 3.....	111
Interpretation of Emergent Theme 4.....	111
Interpretation of Emergent Theme 5.....	112
Interpretation of the Outliers of the Study.....	112
Interpretation of the Expert Opinions Received in Relation to Follower Attributes.....	113
Theoretical Underpinning of Grounded Theory.....	114
Description of the Grounded Theory.....	116
Leader–Follower Unity Model.....	118

Implications for Practice.....	122
Recommendations for Future Research.....	124
Concluding Comments.....	126
REFERENCES.....	128
APPENDIX A: A LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY.....	140
APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT.....	141
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL.....	142
APPENDIX D: SAMPLE OPEN CODING PROCEDURES.....	144
APPENDIX E: SAMPLE MATRIX ANALYSIS.....	145

LIST OF TABLES

1. Prilipko's Taxonomy of Leadership Theories with the Follower Component.....	23
2. Participants' Ratings of the Importance of Follower Attributes.....	94
3. Attributes Suggested to be Re-worded by Participants.....	95
4. Additional Attributes Suggested by Participants.....	101

LIST OF FIGURES

1. The process of qualitative data analysis.....	62
2. Seven participants of the study.....	68
3. Components of data analysis.....	79
4. Emergent themes.....	80
5. Outliers of the study.....	89
6. Bifurcation of participants' responses to the list of follower attributes.....	93
7. Participants' ratings of the importance of follower attributes.....	94
8. Attributes suggested to be re-worded.....	96
9. Five emergent themes.....	102
10. Triangulation process.....	104
11. Triangulation equation.....	105
12. Questions posed and answers obtained.....	107
13. Emergence of the grounded theory.....	114
14. Design of a new Leader–Follower course based on the grounded theory.....	118
15. Heavy emphasis on leadership in teaching.....	119
16. Leader and follower attributes—not identical, but overlapping.....	120

Chapter 1: Introduction

Context of the Study

Aristotle once noted that “all great leaders must first learn to follow” (Goffee and Jones, 2006, p. 25). Hegel taught in the 18th century that a good leader was the one who consolidated the experiences and qualities of a follower, and then applied followership to the process of leading (Hollander, 1995, 2004). Management scholar Mary Parker Follett (1949) advocated the criticality of research on the topic of followership that she believed was highly important but too little considered. Without his supportive armies, Napoleon was just a man of grand ambitions (Kelley, 1988).

While the concept of leadership has been widely researched for decades, followership, as its vital component, has been given scant attention until recently (Adair, 2008; Baker, 2007; Bjugstad, Thach, Thompson, & Morris, 2006; Brumm & Drury, 2013; Carsten, Uhl-Bien, West, Patera, & McGregor, 2010; Cox III, Plagens, & Sylla, 2010; Kellerman, 2008; Kelley, 2008; Lundin & Lancaster, 1990; Riggio, Chaleff, & Lipman-Blumen, 2008; Sy, 2010; Tee, Paulsen, & Ashkanasy, 2013; Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, & Carsten, 2014). In particular, the last several years are marked by a focused attention to various aspects of followership (Brumm & Drury, 2013; Carsten et al., 2010; Cox III et al., 2010; Malakyan, 2014; Sy, 2010; Tee et al., 2013; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

Sparks of the followers’ importance can be traced back to the pre-World War I works of the German sociologist Max Weber (1968) and his contemporary Georg Simmel. The latter suggested that followers influence their leaders just as equally as leaders influence them (Gardner, 1987). The political scientist–historian James McGregor Burns (1978) laid early groundwork for leadership theorists. John Gardner (1987), a

quintessential American leader, author, activist, and reformer, maintained that the interaction between leaders and constituents is one of the most critical components within the study of leadership. Joseph Rost (1991), a distinguished scholar in leadership studies, believed that followers and the relationship between leaders and followers are of utmost importance.

Before the importance of an “enigmatic majority” (followers) (Adair, 2008, p. 137) was recognized by management scholars in the first decades of the 20th century, it was first noted in psychoanalysis, psychology (Freud in 1921, Fromm in 1941), anthropology (Mead in 1949), and sociology (Sanford in 1950, Homans in 1950 and 1961), as supported by Baker (2007). In the social sciences, followership research began in 1955 with the work of Hollander and Webb (1955), who insisted on leader–follower interdependency and follower characteristics to be a critical factor of an effective leadership process (Baker, 2007).

In the late 1980s Robert Kelley wholeheartedly devoted himself to the followership phenomenon (Hollander, 2004; Kelley, 1988; 1992; Riggio et al., 2008). Robert Kelley (2008) admits: “I made a major step [introducing followership] with my 1988 *Harvard Business Review* article, ‘In Praise of Followers,’” (p. 5), “the most cited early work on followership,” as stated by Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, and Carsten (2014, p. 90).

Kelley (2008) states:

In it, I explained that we view the world as a map with leadership in the center and everything else on the periphery. I remember a perspective-altering trip to Japan, where I was shown a world map with Japan in the center and the United States tucked over in the corner. This is what I wanted to do for followership: to put it in the middle of the map and to let everything else to be on the periphery. (p. 6)

In the late 1980s society could not understand his interest in followership when leadership was at the peak of media attention. Kelley (2008) confesses:

No one talked about followership; it was never part of the conversation, unless it was tagged on as an afterthought. At some point, I finally decided to put a stake in the ground and say to the world, “We need to pay attention to followers. Followership is worthy of its own discrete research and training. Plus, conversations about leadership need to include followership because leaders neither exist nor act in a vacuum without followers.” (p. 5)

Examining followership from an evolutionary standpoint, Van Vugt (2006) claims that it still remains not fully known why individuals choose to become leaders, and it is even more bewildering that people voluntarily follow the leaders. Solomon (2004) confirms that following may be as equally active and independent as a choice to lead. DePree (1992) purports: “As long as a follower is in the group you lead, she is essential” (p. 198). Thus, it is now acutely important to recognize that followership is not just the inseparable component of the leadership process which has been previously neglected, but might be regarded by some as the primary one (Adair, 2008; Bjugstad et al., 2006; Carsten et al., 2010; Heller & Van Til, 1982; Kelley, 1988; 1992; Nolan & Harty, 1984; Van Vugt, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2008).

Most individuals act as leaders in certain situations and as followers in others (Adair, 2008; Baker, Mathis, & Stites-Doe, 2011; Chaleff, 2009, 2010; Cox III et al., 2010; Howell & Mendez, 2008; Kellerman, 2012; Kelley, 1988; 1992; Malakyan, 1998; 2014, Rost, 1991; 1995). Rarely individuals find themselves performing a leader role exclusively. Malakyan (1998) believes that “only Jesus is considered to be an absolute leader and exercise leadership authority at all times” (p. 116). “Someone leading all of the time seems to be ineffective and unnatural” (Malakyan, 2014, p. 8). After all, leaders

typically rise from those who have proved themselves as exceptional followers to begin with (Hollander, 1992).

Leaders with no followers are as unthinkable as teachers with no students. They are two parts of a whole (Chaleff, 2009). Being linked concepts, neither of them can be comprehended without understanding the other (Heller & Van Til, 1982). Prilipko, Antelo, and Henderson (2011) view leadership and followership “as a symbiotic relationship where leadership acknowledges and respects the professional, knowledgeable, experienced, skilled and trustworthy contributions of followership” (p. 1). Uhl-Bien et al.’s (2014) comprehensive review of leadership and followership research has lead them to conclude that the role of followership is so strongly integrated into leadership, that “it is hard to disentangle followership from leadership” (p. 95).

Kelley (1992) compares leaders and followers with travelers embarking on a journey together with a unanimous mission of making it to the final destination safe and sound. Leadership and followership are “two sides of the same coin, the two it takes to tango, the composer and musicians making music, the female and male generating new life, the yin and the yang” (Rost, 1991, p. 109).

Adair (2008) observes:

When looking at leaders and collaborators, researchers view this relationship as two different sides of the same coin, but they have stared so long and hard at the leadership side that most have no idea what sits on the other side of that coin. (p. 139)

The term *follower* is not a synonym for notions of conformity, submission, docility, weakness, and inability to excel. Goffee and Jones (2001) are indignant at comparing followers with “an empty vessel waiting to be led, or even transformed, by the leader” (p. 148). In their later works they suggest that it is the followers’ responsibility to

refrain from blind compliance and withdraw from a failing leader at the right moment (Goffee & Jones, 2006).

As Chaleff (2009) suggests, “the sooner we move beyond these images and get comfortable with the idea of *powerful* [emphasis in original] followers supporting *powerful* [emphasis in original] leaders, the sooner we can fully develop and test models for dynamic, self-responsible, synergistic relationships in our organizations” (p. 3). As De Pree (1992) asserts, real leadership is revealed through performance of the entire group. “The leader does not exist, fully formed, before the encounter with the group he is to lead” (Mazlish, 1981, p. 218).

Baker (2007) maintains:

Followers are an integral part of organizations, and the leader–follower relationship is an important factor in organizational success. Understanding the context of followership theory in [sic] as important as understanding the context of leadership theory as researchers study effective organizations. (p. 58)

Follower attributes. Follower attributes have not been given a fair amount of attention (Antelo, Prilipko, & Sheridan-Pereira, 2010; Burns, 1978; Hur, 2008; Kelley, 1988; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). According to Hur (2008), they have been “buried in the study of the leader–follower relationship” (p. 367). As Burns (1978) affirms, in order to gain a better understanding of a leader–follower dichotomy, “in-depth research needs to be conducted to assess the most common characteristics that followers possess” (p. 82). Kelley (1988) calls for “polishing the follower skills,” confirming that in order to develop good followers, their human qualities necessary for effective followership need to be understood (p. 143).

Many studies on followership support that followers’ attributes are the same as leaders’ (Baker et al., 2011; Hemphill & Coons, 1950; Hollander, 1992; Kelley, 1988;

Kellerman, 2008; Lundin & Lancaster, 1990; Nolan & Harty, 1984; Stogdill & Coons, 1957). Nolan and Harty (1984) affirm that leader behavior traits proposed in the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire by Hemphill and Coons (1950), “are obviously essential to good followership: making attitudes clear, maintaining standards of performance, informing others as to what is expected of them, treating all as equals, being friendly and approachable and accepting suggestions of others” (p. 311). Other attributes of good followership, such as intelligence, cooperativeness, diplomacy, and sociability, as introduced by Stogdill and Coons (1957) are also viewed as traits of leadership.

Nolan and Harty (1984) believe that followership attributes are the same as leadership attributes proposed by Giammatteo and Giammatteo (1981): “sensitivity, self-identification, listening ability, absence of ridicule, ability to communicate, understanding of the needs of others, recognition of everyone’s worth and willingness to share responsibility” (p. 311). As Nolan and Harty (1984) assert, “leadership and followership go hand in glove” and their attributes should be corresponding (p. 312). Kelley (1988) suggests that such qualities as self-management, commitment to the organization, focus on maximum impact, courage, honesty, and credibility are the most critical for effective followers. Kelley (1988) also supports that qualities found in good followers are the same qualities that make the most effective leaders.

Kellerman (1999) summarized traits/attributes, challenges, strategies and values of the picture-perfect “reinvented leader” regardless of the sector that one might be in (pp. 216-217). Some of them confirm the attributes previously mentioned, i.e. “rather high intelligence, empathy and insight, good character, etc.” (pp. 216-217). Thus, taking

into account Kellerman's (2008) standpoint that attributes of followers and leaders should be corresponding, Kellerman's (1999) list is the most detailed one found in the literature.

There are a plethora of suggestions on how outstanding followers should act. According to Chaleff (2009), they need to be self-inspired, self-motivated, cooperative, collaborative, caring, perceiving of the needs of both the leader and the other followers, and many more. There are also *types* of followers that have been identified. Thus, Kelley's dimensions include the "sheep, the yes-people, the alienated" (Kelley, 1988, p. 143; Kelley, 1992, p. 97), "the pragmatics and the star-followers" (Kelley, 1992, p. 97). Chaleff (2009) categorizes followers as "implementer, partner, individualist, and resource" (pp. 39-42), and Kellerman's (2008) types are "isolate, bystander, participant, activist, and diehard" (p. 85).

While there is a debate regarding the specific identification of follower attributes, the phenomenon that still remains unknown is what follower characteristics are the most needed to further enhance the competencies of followers that would naturally result in a more effective leadership dynamic (Baker, 2007; Chaleff, 2009; Kellerman, 2008; Kelley, 1992; Riggio et al., 2008). Antelo, Henderson and St. Clair (2010) share this concern of "what attributes a person should have as a follower to engage in the leadership process" (p. 2). Among other followership areas that are yet to be investigated, is "categorization of characteristics held by effective followers" (Baker, 2007, p. 58).

As Goffee and Jones (2006) marvel: "What is it that makes a good follower, and how can followers contribute to the creation of effective leadership?" (p. 25). Although Kelley (1988) has suggested such topics for follower training as "similarities and differences between followership roles," "moving between the two roles with ease," and

others (p. 147), research is needed on specific skills most beneficial to individuals in the follower role.

Current state of leadership and followership in academia. Universities offer a wide range of leadership courses nationwide and only few schools currently acknowledge the importance of teaching followership as they add followership courses to their curricula (Kelley, 1992; Malakyan, 2014; Riggio et al., 2008). Kelley has been teaching a course, Followership and Leadership for Professional Effectiveness, in the Industrial Management Program at the Graduate School of Industrial Administration of Carnegie-Mellon University since 1985 (Kelley, 1992; 2010).

Kellerman, who teaches Foundations of Leadership and Followership at Dartmouth and Followership at Harvard Kennedy School of Government, affirms that followers have always had more significance than it is commonly acknowledged. “Yet during the last quarter century, during which the ‘leadership industry’ grew exponentially, we have been fixated on leaders and ignored followers nearly completely” (Kellerman, 2008a, para. 1). When teaching followership, the author explains that this course “was designed to correct for our over-emphasis on leaders and for our misguided and even mistaken under-emphasis on followers—in the workplace and in the society at large” (Kellerman, 2008a, para. 3). She claims:

This course presumes that followership is every bit as important as is leadership, that both need to be considered in context, and that questions such as why we follow, and how followers differ one from the other, are as important to the creation of change as any of those more conventionally posed in the leadership industry. (Kellerman, 2013a, para. 1)

A plethora of Leadership conferences, workshops and other events are held each year by numerous organizations. The first groundbreaking Followership conference

organized by the International Leadership Association (ILA), however, took place as recently as in 2006 at Claremont University. It was hosted by the Kravis Leadership Institute under the banner “Rethinking Followership: New Paradigms, Perspectives and Practices” (Followership Learning Community, 2013; Kelley, 2008; Riggio et al., 2008). Since then, ILA has held global annual conferences and continues to develop and advance leadership and followership knowledge.

Definition of Terms

For clarity and precision, all definitions below are based on Merriam-Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary (2013), followed by definitions of the same terms by leadership and followership scholars.

Merriam-Webster (2013) defines a *follower* as “one that follows the opinions or teachings of another,” whereas *followership* is defined as “the capacity or willingness to follow a leader.”

A *follower* is an organizational member who reports to another organizational member designated as a leader (Chaleff, 2009; Kellerman, 2008; Kelley, 1992, 2008).

Kellerman (2008) puts forth the following clarifications: “Followers can be identified by their *rank*: they are subordinates who have less power, authority, and influence than do their superiors. Followers can also be defined by their *behavior*: they go along with what someone else wants and intends” (p. xix).

Followership is a blend of cognitive and meta-cognitive processes and behavioral attributes followers use to interact with the designated leader (Chaleff, 2009; Kellerman, 2008; Kelley 1992, 2008). “Followership implies a relationship (rank), between subordinates and superiors, and a response (behavior), of the former to the latter”

(Kellerman, 2008, p. xx). “*Followership* [emphasis added] is not a person, but a role, and what distinguishes followers from leaders is not intelligence or character, but the role they play” (Kelley, 1988, p. 146).

Attribute, according to Merriam-Webster (2013), is “an inherent characteristic.” Throughout this study, the terms *characteristics*, *traits*, *qualities* and *skills* will be used interchangeably with the term *attribute*.

A *leader* is “a person who has commanding authority or influence” (Merriam-Webster, 2013).

Kellerman (2008) affirms that the term *leader* is used by different experts in different ways: (a) leaders as people in positions of authority, (b) leaders as those who engage and influence their followers, and (c) those leaders who “get the many to do what they want and intend, by any means necessary” (p. xx).

Leadership is understood as “(1) the office or position of a leader, (2) capacity to lead, (3) the act or an instance of leading” (Merriam-Webster, 2013).

Leadership “is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes” (Rost, 1991, p. 102). As Rost (1991) admits, every word in this definition was scrupulously selected to transmit very specific meanings that carry certain assumptions and values critical in a postindustrial view of leadership. In 1995, however, Rost edited his definition of leadership changing the word “followers” to “collaborators,” explaining that he has “since given up on the concept of followers as hopelessly irredeemable” (p. 133).

In Kellerman’s (1999) terms, *leadership* is “the effort by leaders—who may hold, but do not necessarily hold, formal positions of authority—to engage followers in the

joint pursuit of mutually agreed-on goals. These goals represent significant, rather than merely incremental, change” (p. 10).

No widely accepted definition of leadership exists since there are as many different opinions on the concept of leadership as there are people who have attempted to define it (Rost, 1995). In fact, Rost (1991), the leadership expert, after analyzing over 221 definitions of leadership, concluded that not a single individual has been able to define leadership with precision neither when they observe it nor in action. However, in his interpretation, most scholars writing about leadership understood it as good management (Rost, 1995).

Problem Statement

An impressive number of workshops, training sessions, and courses are offered on cultivating leadership skills while emphasis on the followership component of the leadership process is very slim. As Rost (1991) pointed out, “the understanding of leadership as a relationship, the connection among leaders and followers—all these are far down on the list of priorities that scholars and practitioners must have in order to understand how to put leadership to work” (p. 4). He further explains that little attention has been given to leadership as a dynamic relationship between leaders and followers, where both parties work collaboratively to achieve a purpose. He opines that instead of viewing leadership as the most essential relationship between leaders and followers, too much prime time is given to the tangential elements and the context of leadership.

Although followership has been addressed from various angles, the following questions have not received clear answers in the literature (a) Can follower skills be taught? (b) What skills need to be taught to individuals to enhance their follower skills in

the leadership process? (c) At what level should follower skills be offered? Therefore, a critical need exists to examine the teachability of follower skills. This knowledge would fill the existing gaps in the literature and allow a proposition of a set of skills to be taught to individuals to enhance their follower skills, augment leader–follower effectiveness, individual growth, and organizational success.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to identify the most important characteristics to be exhibited by individuals in the follower role and propose a method of teaching them to become skilled followers.

Research Questions guiding the study:

RQ 1: How can scarcity of followership courses in academic curricula be explained?

RQ 2: Can follower skills be taught?

RQ 3: At what academic levels should follower skills be taught?

RQ 4: What skills need to be taught to individuals to enhance their follower skills in the leadership process?

Theoretical Framework

The main function of the conceptual framework is “to position the researcher in relationship to the research” (Holliday, 2007, p. 47). According to Silverman (2000), theories segregate data into fragments in order to explain a phenomenon under investigation. “Without a theory there is nothing to research” (Silverman, 2000, p. 78). On one hand, theories guide new researchers and instruct them how to perceive phenomena in certain ways; on the other hand, theories selected for application in the

study may become modified, advanced, and developed in the course of research (Silverman, 2000).

A list of follower attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010) is used for the purpose of this study as a theoretical underpinning. The scholars researched the attributes that individuals should exhibit as followers engaged in the leadership process, and proposed the list of follower attributes:

1. Facility for interpersonal relations concerning relationships between people.
2. Facility for group relations and functions concerning the infrastructure or means to form a cohesive group or unit.
3. Tolerance concerning acceptance of the differing views of other people.
4. Conceptual understanding concerning the ability to use knowledge, reasoning, intuition and perception.
5. Facility for earning and embracing change concerning the process of solving a question or puzzle, difficulty, or situation.
6. Facility for effective communication concerning accurate exchange of information between or among people.
7. Reliability as a group member concerning the ability with the creation of patterns and the capacity to solve organizational problems.
8. Facility for contribution to the group concerning the ability to use the imagination to develop new and original ideas or things.
9. Emotional intelligence concerning personal attributes that enable people to succeed in life, including self-awareness, empathy, self-confidence, and self-control.
10. Facility for supporting others concerning a picture of likeness of someone or something produced either physically or formed in the mind of the beholder.
11. Flexibility concerning the ability to change or be changed according to needs or circumstances.

12. Motivation for goal accomplishment on a variety of projects concerning the biological, emotional, cognitive, or social forces that activate and direct behavior. (Antelo et al., 2010, p. 13)

Current theoretical framework is pivotal to this study as it serves as a platform for the interview protocol. The participants of the study are asked to comment on the importance of each attribute.

Significance

In addition to extending our awareness of a broader phenomenon of followership as a critical leadership component, this research aims to provide a much needed understanding of the follower attributes that can be learned and taught. Teaching follower attributes for the purpose of follower skills development is significant as it has a direct multifaceted impact on: (a) individuals' personal and professional growth; (b) individuals' effectiveness and their accomplishments in the organizational settings; (c) follower–leader dichotomy; (d) leadership and organizational effectiveness, which inevitably leads to (e) progress in customer relations, satisfaction; and (f) overall organizational success and growth.

The audience likely to benefit from this study comprises academic circles and faculty responsible for educating leaders and followers, as well organizational consultants specializing in leadership and followership areas. Students, management, executives, administrators, and organizations may perceive this study as an auxiliary opportunity to challenge their traditional views of leadership and followership to arrive at their own understanding of the importance of followership as a role most commonly played by individuals. Since any audience simultaneously represents leaders and followers, training suggested to enhance follower skills could be offered as a course at undergraduate and

graduate levels, and/or trainings, workshops, and seminars in multifarious organizational settings.

Limitations of the Study

Delimitations. Delimitations narrow the scope of a study. The study may be delimited to a certain site or specific participants (Creswell, 2003). This study may be narrowed in scope as it is limited to the perceptions of seven leadership and followership experts.

Limitations. Limitations serve to identify potential weaknesses of the study that may have affected the results (Creswell, 2003; 2008). Limitations are instrumental to other potential researchers who may choose to replicate or conduct a similar study. “Advancing these limitations provides a useful bridge for recommending future studies. Limitations also help readers judge to what extent the findings can or cannot be generalized to other people and situations” (Creswell, 2008, p. 207). Therefore, the purposive sampling procedures designed for this qualitative study decrease the generalizability of findings. Thus, this study will not be generalizable to all of the leadership and followership experts. Also, the findings could be subject to other interpretations.

Summary

Literature on leadership until recently was an imbalanced split—a wealth of resources on leadership and acute scarcity on followership (Adair, 2008; Baker, 2007; Bjugstad et al., 2006; Brumm & Drury, 2013; Carsten et al., 2010; Cox III et al., 2010; Kellerman, 2008; Kelley, 2008; Lundin & Lancaster, 1990; Sy, 2010; Tee et al., 2013; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). The history of leadership research can be perceived as “the study

of leaders and ‘subordinates’” (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). Interdependence of leaders and followers, and, even more so, the criticality of followers have been neglected.

Availability of followership courses in the academic curricula to this day remains limited (Kelley, 1992; Malakyan, 2014; Riggio et al., 2008). In the last decades attempts have been made to approach followership from various angles. Followership attributes have received little attention and controversial views (Burns, 1978; Hur, 2008, Kelley, 1988; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). The list of follower attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010) serves as a theoretical platform for further investigation in this work.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The idea of leaders as heroes and symbols of power, wisdom, knowledge, and authority, and followers as dependents prevails in the society. It is not well recognized that these characteristics are ascribed to leaders by followers, similar to Max Weber/Robert House's concept of *charisma* when followers fervently attribute super powers (exceptional traits or qualities) to their leaders (Boone & Bowen, 1987; Ciulla, 2004; Gardner, 1987; Hollander, 1992; Nahavandi, 2009; Robbins & Judge, 2009). "Emphasizing leadership to the exclusion of followership breeds a single-minded conformism" (Kelley, 1992, p. 9). In order to understand why organizations fail, freeze, or succeed, it is imperative to step away from the notion of leadership and expose follower attributes to the spotlight.

It is more common that leaders receive acknowledgement of their extraordinary deeds than followers. Does a firefighter become a leader when he courageously runs into a burning building to rescue a child, or does he remain a dutiful follower? What are the skills that make him an exceptional follower? Can those skills be taught? This example serves as an illustration of the purpose of the study: If individuals could be taught certain follower attributes that would enhance their organizational performance, what attributes would they need to be taught?

The purpose of this chapter is to present thematically organized literature review to reveal the current state of knowledge about followership. As Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009) explain, "the review of related literature involves the systematic identification, location, and analysis of documents containing information related to the research

problem” (p. 80). The process of literature review allows the researcher to discover what research strategies and data collection approaches have been successful in prior investigations. This knowledge is beneficial to the researcher as it prevents from previous mistakes and allows learning from the experiences of preceding studies. Being familiar with previous research also enables the investigators to compare the results of their studies with earlier findings, or conclude that no similar studies have been conducted. Thus, this chapter will facilitate our understanding of the studies that have been done in the area of followership and follower attributes along with the aspects that call for further research.

Origin and History of the Term

The etymological roots of the word *follower* go back to Old High German *follaziohan*, with the meaning “to assist, help, succor, or minister to” (Kelley, 1992, p. 34). This term corresponds with the Old High German root of *leader*, with the meaning “to undergo, suffer, or endure” (p. 34). Kelley (1992) further explains that in its original meaning followers helped take care of leaders; nevertheless, it is an enigma “why leaders suffered or were in need of care” (p. 34). Furthermore, there was not the slightest indication of inferiority to followers and they were seen as honorable equals, such as the knights of King Arthur when they joined him at the Round Table (Kelley, 1992, pp. 34-35).

Escalation of Followership in the Literature Through the Years

The study of followership until very recently has been largely neglected (Adair, 2008; Baker, 2007; Bjugstad et al., 2006; Brumm & Drury, 2013; Carsten et al., 2010; Cox III et al., 2010; Kellerman, 2008; Kelley, 2008; Lundin & Lancaster, 1990; Sy, 2010;

Tee et al., 2013; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). Bligh (2011) notes that throughout the 19-year timeframe from 1990 to 2008 there were only as little as 14% of the articles containing the term *follower* in the abstract or title in *The Leadership Quarterly*.

As Chaleff (2009) concurs:

If you scroll through the subject catalog at the Library of Congress, you will find the category “leadership,” and you will only find a handful of articles and books on the subject, tucked away under the leadership rubric. This is curious as there are many more followers in the world than leaders. Improving their performance would seem equally worthy of study as improving the performance of leaders. (p. xvii)

Kellerman (2008) declares:

In fact, the word itself, followership, remains suspect. Look up the word in your dictionary, and it’s as likely as not to be missing. Type the word into your computer, and it’s as likely as not to be rejected, either as misspelled or as not even in the English language. Search the Web, and the results are similarly telling: maybe a few hundred thousand results for followership, compared with a billion or more for leadership. The bottom line: for all the lip service paid to the importance of the relationship between leaders and followers, the message we receive is that the former belong front and center and the latter off to the side. (p. xviii)

A profound work on followership began in 1955 with publications by Hollander and associates, followed by Gardner’s (1987) *Leaders and Followers*, Kelley’s (1988) article in Harvard Business Review *In Praise of Follower*, and a seminal Joseph Rost’s (1991) book *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*. In his book *The Power of Followership*, Kelley (1992) posed questions: “Why... do people tend to value leaders and undervalue followers? Why do we refuse to appreciate that follower are *us* [emphasis in original]?” (p. 8).

Since then, appreciation of followership as a vital component of the leadership process has escalated significantly (Adair, 2008; Kellerman, 2008; Riggio et al., 2008). The first national conference on followership took place in 2006 at Claremont McKenna

College and continues to serve its academic and research purposes. Thousands of master's theses and doctoral dissertations have addressed followership in areas ranging from nursing, education, business, sports, hotel industry, and others.

Leadership and Followership as Inseparable Units

Based on an exhaustive review of literature, leadership and followership are undeniably united in a symbiotic relationship (Adair, 2008; Baker et al., 2011; Chaleff, 2009, 2010; Cox III et al., 2010; Heller & Van Til, 1982; Hollander, 1992, 2013; Hollander & Offermann, 1990; Gardner, 1987; Lundin & Lancaster, 1990; Prilipko et al., 2011; Riggio et al., 2008; Rost, 1991; 1995; Sy, 2010; Tee et al., 2013; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). There is no distinct line between leaders and followers, as it used to be understood by many (Lee, 1983). "Leadership is done *with* [emphasis in original] people, not *to* [emphasis in original] people" (Hersey & Blanchard, 1996, p. 44). Follett (1949) claims that both leaders and followers follow the so-called "invisible leader"—the common purpose. Followership is an "interactive partnership; it is not a hierarchical relationship" (Cox III, Plagens, & Sylla, 2010, p. 49).

Lee (1983) views followers as "persons who need leaders to accomplish purposes important to an institution, community or social order. They are, generally, competent people. Many are positive, affirming their leaders and themselves" (p. 169). "Just as the word 'right' makes no sense without 'left,' they depend upon each other for existence and meaning. They can never be independent" (Kelley, 1992, p. 45). Leadership and followership should be thought of as a tandem, "inseparable, indivisible, inconceivable the one without the other" (Kellerman, 2008, p. 239). Adair (2008) concurs, "There is so

much interplay and crossover between leadership and followership that the two cannot be studied completely independently of each other” (p. 153).

Malakyan (2014) agrees, by saying:

Leadership and followership as behavioral functions ought to be treated mutually and studied simultaneously. The theoretical foundation of followership should be studied along with the foundations of leadership in order to understand how the relationships between the two dependent variables work. Nearly every relationship incorporates leadership and followership directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously. Both functions are vital components of human interactions. Thus societies need effective followers no less than they need effective leaders. (pp. 16-17)

As Malakyan (2014) further explains, the time has come to combine leadership and followership and study them as one inseparable discipline. “This does not mean, however, abandoning what has already been established in leadership studies, but rather bringing followership into the discussion and studying leadership along with followership as one unit” (Malakyan, 2014, p. 8).

Malakyan (2014) introduced the leader–follower trade approach as a vehicle for consolidating followership in the leadership research and defined it:

Leadership–followership processes occur in relationships and leading–following functions are exchangeable behaviors in human relationships. Thus, leaders and followers trade their functions from leader to follower and from follower to leader in order to develop their intrapersonal perspectives, foster interpersonal relationships, and maximize mutual effectiveness. (Malakyan, 2014, p. 8)

After conducting a careful examination of historical treatment of followers in the leadership process, Uhl-Bien et al. (2014) are puzzled by “the extent to which leadership scholars have long agreed that leadership is a process occurring in interactions between leaders and followers” (p. 88). They conclude: “*It is now widely accepted that leadership cannot be fully understood without considering the role of followers in the leadership process* [emphasis in original]” (p. 89).

Prilipko's Taxonomy of Leadership Theories with the Follower Component

A comprehensive review of leadership theories resulted in a list of selected theories that incorporate various aspects of followership as its integral element. These theories are presented in Table 1 and are arranged in a historical order of leadership theory development: the Contingency Era (early 1960s to present) and Contemporary/New Models for Leadership (1970s to present) (Boone & Bowen, 1987; Burns, 1978; Nahavandi, 2009; Robbins & Judge, 2009). The role of followers within each theory is indicated. The purpose of this taxonomy is to reflect the presence of followers within the leadership process as acknowledged in each leadership theory, and emphasize that leadership is inconceivable without followers.

Contingency and contemporary leadership models demonstrate the importance of the followership component as it is integrated in each of these theories. Malakyan (2014) examines existing leadership theories and insists that a prevailing number of these theories still have a leader-centric approach. They acknowledge the presence of followers, but do not place them in equilibrium with the leaders.

Avolio and Reichard (2008) note that parallel to authentic leadership, there is authentic followership: "Authentic followership develops from modeling by the authentic leader and likely vice versa, depending on the qualities and capabilities of the follower, which produces heightened levels of follower and leader self-awareness" (p. 327). Bass and Riggio (2006) and Uhl-Bien et al. (2014) affirm that transformational leadership remains the most researched leadership theory as transformational leaders focus on

Table 1

Prilipko's Taxonomy of Leadership Theories with the Follower Component

Theory	Author and Year	Follower Component
Contingency Models (early 1960s to Present)		
Contingency Model	Fred Fiedler, 1967	Followers facilitate an identification of a leader's individual leadership style. A proper match is desired between a leader's style of interacting with followers.
Path–Goal Theory	Robert House, 1971	Followers' obstacles are reduced and they are provided with resources necessary to achieve organizational goals.
Situational Leadership Theory (SLT), (previously known as Life-Cycle Theory of Leadership, 1969)	Ken Blanchard, Paul Hersey, 1972	Leadership effectiveness depends on the level of followers' readiness (the degree to which followers are able and willing to accomplish a task).
Normative Decision Model (Vroom–Yetton Model)	Victor Vroom, Philip Yetton, Arthur Jago, 1973	Followers' commitment plays an important role in the process of the leader's decision-making.
Substitutes for Leadership Model (SLM)	Steven Kerr, John Jermier, 1978	Certain organizational or individual variables such as followers' training or expertise can substitute for leadership.
Leader–Member Exchange Theory (LMX)	George Graen, Mary Uhl-Bien, 1995	Followers are divided between the in-group (closer to the leader) and out-group (farther from the leader). The in-group followers benefit from a higher level of leader's attention, rewards, and job satisfaction.

Table 1–continued

Prilipko's Taxonomy of Leadership Theories with the Follower Component

Theory	Author and Year	Follower Component
Contemporary/New Models for Leadership (1970s to Present)		
Charismatic Leadership Theory	Max Weber, 1924, Robert House, 1977, James McGregor Burns, 1978	Followers ascribe extraordinary qualities or abilities to the leader. A leader would not be charismatic if the followers did not define one that way.
Transactional Leadership Theory	James McGregor Burns, 1978	Support of followers is exchanged for incentives, and, therefore, may be perceived as manipulated.
Transformational Leadership Theory	James McGregor Burns, 1978	Followers are inspired by their highly moral leaders to direct their efforts towards a common goal for the overall good of the organization.
Servant Leadership Theory	Robert Greenleaf, 1978	Followers are being “served” by leaders, as was found in ancient Eastern and Western thought. Servant leaders lead because they want to serve their followers.
Authentic Leadership Theory	Bill George, 2003	Followers have faith and trust in their leaders. They find them moral, candid, and ethical, and develop strong bonds with the leader.
Team Leadership	Susan Kogler Hill, 2007	Followers constitute teams, and teams and leadership processes reciprocally influence each other.

followers' needs, but still fail to fully acknowledge the attributes or contribution of the followers. Thus, a question of which theory places a bigger emphasis on the importance of followers may still be a question of controversy and various interpretations among scholars.

Formal Theory of Followership

After the fundamental leadership theories are reviewed in the Taxonomy of Leadership Theories with the Follower Component, the question arises whether any theories on followership exist. In 2014 the first formal theory of followership was proposed by Uhl-Bien et al.

As Uhl-Bien et al. (2014) define: “*Followership theory is the study of the nature and impact of followers and following in the leadership process* [emphasis in original]” (p. 96). The theory encompasses (a) a follower role (position of a follower in relation to leaders), (b) following behaviors (in relation to leaders), and (c) outcomes related to the leadership process. “Followership *is* [emphasis in original] the characteristics, behaviors and processes of individuals acting in relation to leaders. It is *not* [emphasis in original] general employee behavior” (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014, p. 96). The scholars explicate that in order for followership to qualify as a construct, it must be conceptualized (a) in relation to leaders and leadership context, and/or (b) in situations where individuals find themselves in follower positions. The authors further propose that the following dimensions could be included in the study of followership (a) followership characteristics, (b) followership behaviors, and (c) follower outcomes (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

Followership theory “is *not* [emphasis in original] the study of leadership from the follower perspective. It *is* [emphasis in original] the study of how followers view and enact following behaviors in relation to leaders” (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014, p. 96).

Followership research should not replicate the existing leadership research, but should rather be seen as the “reversing the lens” approach, where the prime light is on followers construing their roles and the outcomes as a result of the follower behavior (p. 96).

Overall, Uhl-Bien et al. (2014) maintain that followership theory is important in the following ways:

- It propels research to move past leader-centric stands as it acknowledges the criticality of follower roles and behaviors.
- It recognizes organizational outcomes as the product of both parties, leaders and followers.
- It identifies more or less effective follower behaviors.
- It recognizes that leadership not only moves downwards, but can flow in different directions, including upwards.
- When leadership proves to be not the most effective alliance of leaders and followers, it allows discerning how managers may not be effective leaders.
- It recognizes the need not to center solely on leadership development, but also on followership competencies.

Resistance to Followership and Negative Connotations of the Term

Bifurcation between the amount of literature on leadership and that on followership is the most dramatic flaw in the leadership studies (Burns, 1978). While leaders are portrayed with fame, heroism, and superhuman qualities almost to extent of

elitism, followers are most commonly described as flaccid, manipulable, and indiscrete masses of voiceless wooden soldiers marching to commands. Historically, the common portrayal of leaders and followers as fixed roles is rooted in the industrial age and the “Great Man Theory” by Galton (1869/1962). Among the images of the Great Man ideology are Roosevelt, Churchill, Stalin, and Hitler (Baker, 2007).

Thus, the resulting outlook is the view that the upper echelon of hierarchy is represented by powerful and influential leaders who possess status, decision-making authority, and exceptional traits, while the lower level is constructed of obedient, silent, powerless and, therefore, less accountable or effectual followers (Carsten et al., 2010).

Traditional stereotypes of followers as submissive crowds stem from an old assumption of leadership rooted in unquestionable authority and hierarchy, as seen in seminal and most famous work of Barnard (1938), *The Functions of the Executive*, as well as in the works of Weber (1968). Follett (1996) explained that the stand of her contemporaries was that one was “either a leader or nothing at all of much importance” (p. 170). Studies by Van Vugt and colleagues (Van Vugt, 2006; Van Vugt et al., 2008; Gillet, Cartwright, & Van Vugt, 2011) extend an evolutionary psychology perspective, linking human inclination to the absolute dominance or subordination to natural selection. Another mechanism that allows to approach the subject of negative stereotype of the term follower and follower behaviors in the United States is Hofstede and Hofstede’s (2004) cultural dimensions (e.g. power distance, individualism, masculinity, time orientation, uncertainty avoidance) (Brumm & Drury, 2013).

Sy’s (2010) study revealed that individuals are prone to categorize followers into prototypic followers, displaying such attributes as industriousness, enthusiasm, and good

citizenship, and antiprototypic followers, exhibiting conformity, insubordination, and incompetence. In spite the fact that followers are likely to be more familiar with the leader's routine operations, their role is still commonly perceived as passive (Hollander, 1992).

As Joseph Rost (1991) states: "I have no trouble with the word *followers* [emphasis in original], but it does bother a number of other scholars and practitioners, who view the word as condescending" (p. 107). He further explains:

My view is that the problem is not with the word, but with the passive meaning given to the concept of followers by people who lived and worked and wrote in the industrial era. Followers, as a concept, connoted a group of people who were (1) part of the sweaty masses and therefore separated from the elites, (2) not able to act intelligently without the guidance and control of other, (3) willing to let other people (elites) take control of their lives, and (4) unproductive unless directed by others.

In the leadership literature since the 1930s, therefore, followers were considered to be submissive and passive, and leaders were considered to be managers who were directive and active. Since leaders were managers, followers had to be the subordinate people in an organization. There is no other logical equation. (p. 107)

Rost (1991) declares:

No amount of egalitarian idealism will change the fact that there will be followers as long as human beings inhabit this planet. Only the meaning of the word *followers* [emphasis in original] will change, not the existence of human beings who are followers. (p. 108)

One may argue that since the meaning of the terms followers or subordinates are so condescending and offensive, such terms should cease to exist, and if all individuals are considered leaders, then the notion of leadership will no longer be elitist. To those who hold the described viewpoint, Rost (1991) extends the following statement: "If all the people with whom leaders interacted were other leaders, leadership as a meaningful construct would not make much sense" (Rost, 1991, p. 108).

Kelley (1992) adds that, sadly, concepts of leadership and followership have been “stereotyped to the detriment of both. If followers are thought of positively at all, it is as apprentice leaders” (p. 28), or “as an accompaniment to leadership” (Hollander & Offermann, 1990, p. 83). When Kelley conducted a survey and asked people to describe the image that came to their mind when they thought of followers, the amount of negative responses greatly outnumbered the positive ones, with the sheep being the most common term of someone being easily led and manipulated. He concludes that the negative stereotype of followership is firmly embedded in Western society. Chaleff (2009) affirms that the term follower is associated with images of “docility, conformity, weakness, and failure to excel” (p. 3) and concurs with Rost (1991): “Despite the fact that many people experience visceral discomfort with the term *follower* [emphasis in original], it is not realistic to erase all distinctions between the roles of leaders and followers” (p. 1).

An impressive number of undergraduate and graduate programs in business schools across the nation and beyond pride themselves in preparing leaders of the future and have a logo similar to “Where Leaders Are Made” (Canisius, 2014). “Colleges want leaders.’ Those three words have been drilled into my head by teachers, administrators, parents, and books that describe what colleges are looking for” (Kleiner, 2008, p. 89). “Shouldn’t the goal be to work toward bettering a group as a whole and not have countless individuals trying to compete with each other over being the designated leader?” (Kleiner, 2008, p. 90). Medcof’s (2012) study of MBA students at a Canadian university revealed that many of the study participants were reluctant to self-describe themselves as “followers” or to envision themselves in that role.

Few people want to be labeled followers as the term is “often linked to negative and demeaning words like passive, weak, and conforming” (Bjugstad et al., 2006, p. 304). There is a general belief that followers are significantly less important than leaders as well as a reluctance to be called a follower, “a mindless member of a mindless herd, a sheep” (Kellerman, 2008, p. xx). To this day, the term follower may be taken as an insult in the United States and is not comfortably adapted into users’ vocabulary (Chaleff, 2010). Thus, considering historical grounding of the negative connotations of the term follower, it may now be a question for the research to address the reasons why resistance to the term and stereotype associated with it remain to the present day, rather than where they stem from.

Alternatives to the Term Follower

John Gardner (1990) expressed such a disdain towards the word follower, that he chose another route:

The connotations of the word “follower” suggest too much passivity and dependence to make it a fit term for those who are at the other end of the dialogue with leaders. I don’t intend to discard it, but I also make frequent use of the word ‘constituent.’ It is awkward in some contexts, but often it does fuller justice to two-way interchange. (p. 2)

Gardner (1990) along with other scholars chose to de-friend the term follower mainly for egalitarian reasons. Literature yields a conclusion that some individuals also distance themselves from the word follower, finding it condescending and lean to substitute it with such terms as a participant, disciple, member, collaborator, colleague, associate, and partner (Kellerman, 2008; Maroosis, 2008).

Various Views on Followership

James M. Burns. Burns (1978) believed that it was time to demystify the concept of leadership, bring out the concept of followership out of the den, and have the roles of leaders and followers united conceptually. He made a seminal distinction between transactional and transformational leadership, illuminating the importance and difference in followers' behavior with the two types of leadership. In transactional, most common relations between leaders and followers, leaders guide their followers in the direction of organizational goals by clarifying task expectations.

In transforming leadership, the leaders seek to satisfy the higher needs of the followers, thus resulting in a more stimulating and rewarding relationship. Transformational leadership is concerned with values, ethical and moral standards, and long-term goals. The key characteristic of transformational leadership is that it is focused on assessing followers' motives, satisfying their needs, and treating followers fairly and with appreciation (Burns, 1978; Northouse, 2001; Robbins & Judge, 2009).

John W. Gardner. Gardner (1987) believed that the leader–constituents relations are of the utmost importance within the study of leadership and that in reality people tend to overestimate the power of leaders and under appreciate the role of followers. He stated that all the individuals down the line from the leader, who may just as easily be called leaders at their level, share leadership goals unofficially by acting responsibly in congruence with the common purpose (Gardner, 1990). He admitted that these lower level leaders, who are critically vital both to the group and to the leader, have been utterly ignored in the literature.

Joseph C. Rost. Followers and leaders influence one another, the organization, and the society in the process of their interaction, which truly is the process of leadership. “They do not do the same thing in the relationship, just as the composers and the musicians do not do the same thing when making music, but they are both essential to leadership” (Rost, 1991, p. 109). Followers are far from being passive recipients of the leader’s influence. They are active agents in the leadership process, and that is the new meaning of the word “followers” in a postindustrial model of leadership (Rost, 1991).

Rost (1991) dwells on the concept of followership by making the following five clarifications:

1. Only active individuals in the leadership process are followers since the passive ones chose not to be involved, and are, therefore, not followers.
2. The level of activeness depends among individuals from those being extremely active to those who are minimally active to those who chose to be active at certain times.
3. Followers and leaders exchange positions at different times and play these roles interchangeably according to the needs of the organization. Doing so allows followers to be more flexible and influential.
4. Followers are not always followers in all leadership relationships. They may be followers in one group and leaders in a different group.
5. Followers and leaders form one relationship and that is leadership.

Although followers like being treated with respect and consideration, there are times when they expect clear and firm decisions from the leader. Overall, Rost’s (1991)

conclusion is straightforward: “Followers do not do followership. They do leadership. There is no such thing as followership in the new school of leadership” (p. 109).

Edwin P. Hollander. Hollander’s belief is manifested in the phrase “leadership is a process, not a person” (Hollander, 1992, p. 71). He maintains that leadership is a process consisting of efforts of both leaders and followers and characteristics peculiar to leaders can be equal characteristics of outstanding followers. He describes the traditional view of leader–follower hierarchy as the positions of parents and children: while parents hold the wisdom and decision-making power, children are to expect the top-down direction. Hollander alleges: “Our understanding of leadership is incomplete if we do not recognize its unity with followership. One implication of this is to allow more latitude for inputs from various sources by bringing followers into the process to a larger extent” (Hollander, 1992, p. 74).

Hollander and Offermann (1990) argue that although the leadership studies assumed the presence of followers to a certain extent, they did it with the followers viewed as passive and powerless. They further insist that the process of leadership must be studied with leadership and followership integrated in one, as the efforts of both contribute to organizational outcomes. Hollander (2013), describing his Inclusive Leadership (IL), emphasizes the importance of “*doing things with people, rather than to people* [emphasis in original]” (p. 122) and explains that IL “views leadership and followership as interdependent and as best when inclusive to achieve mutual benefits” (p. 124).

In IL leadership and followership are combined to a mutually agreed two-way “inclusive” process, whereby both parties are enhanced by competencies brought by

another party (Hollander, 2013, p. 125). Hollander (2013) asserts that good leadership takes into consideration the needs, interests, and talents of followers, recognizing that followers are active members of the organizational process, and that fair inclusion of followers, in the long run, will result in richer organizational outcomes.

Robert E. Kelley. In his book, *The Power of Followership*, Kelley (1992) sees followership and leadership as two independent concepts, two separate entities that complement each other. There must be great followers and great leaders in the organization. Kelley is indignant at the negative associations that have been ascribed to followers. He wonders:

When you are in the follower role, do you think of yourself as fitting the negative stereotype? Are you blindly obedient? Do you stop using your intelligence, motivation, and conscience? Do you wait to be told what to do? My guess is that you are every bit the positive, exemplary follower. (p. 29)

Kelley's followership styles include passive, pragmatist, conformist, alienated, and exemplary followers. He explains in detail the differences between each type and explains how exemplary followers are different from the other types of followers. In addition to having high competence, they are distinguished by independent, critical thinking, thinking out of the box, being innovative, creative and ready to stand up to leaders.

Kelley (1992) posed the question whether the skills of exemplary followers can be taught to others and the results of his questionnaires yielded the following three broad categories of skills that are both learnable and doable: (a) job skills (commitment, competence, initiative); (b) organizational skills (nurturing relationships with team members, organizational networks and leaders); and (c) values component (exercising courageous conscience).

Kelley further thoroughly provided guidance on how to nurture and develop the above mentioned skills to become an exemplary follower by sharing leadership secrets from exemplary followers. This book, written for followers, urges them not follow their leaders blindly, and serves as a guide to self-development.

Barbara Kellerman. In her book, *Followership: How Followers are Creating Change and Changing Leaders*, Kellerman (2008) confirms that the number of books and articles on followership as well as more studies on leaders and leadership with an emphasis on followers and followership increase in academic literature with years. She relies on Freud, who was the first one to explain *why* individuals and groups follow leaders, including despot leaders, and *how* they follow.

Kellerman (2008) states that when people talk about leaders, their peculiarities and differences are emphasized, but when it comes to followers, they are generally portrayed as amorphous masses as if followers are all the same. Kellerman (2008) examines followers within the context. She explains that being a follower in a small firm is different than in a large organization, and being a follower of an autocratic leader is different from being a follower of a participative-style leader.

Kellerman's (2008) follower typology is based on the followers' level of engagement within an organization: (a) isolate, (b) bystander, (c) participant, (d) activist, and (e) diehard. She then proceeds to distinguish between the bad and good types of followers. "Good followers are in some way involved in the groups and organizations of which they are members: they do something, as opposed to doing nothing. Good followers also support good leaders, those who are effective and ethical" (p. 234).

Kellerman's (2008) six conclusive assumptions about followers are:

1. “Followers constitute a group that, although amorphous, nevertheless has members with interests in common.
2. While followers by definition lack authority, at least in relation to their superiors, they do not by definition lack power and influence.
3. Followers can be agents of change.
4. Followers ought to support good leadership and thwart bad leadership.
5. Followers who do something are nearly always preferred to followers who do nothing.
6. Followers can create change by circumventing their leaders and joining with other followers instead.” (p. 241)

Kellerman (2008) suggests not to transform followers into leaders, but to encourage them to engage regardless of their subordinate rank, as no individual remains a leader at all times and never acts as a follower.

In her most recent book, *The End of Leadership*, Kellerman (2012) states: “Leaders were generally expected to tell followers what to do, and followers were generally expected to do as they were told. No longer. Now followers, like wives, are far sturdier than they used to be, stronger and more independent” (p. xvii). Kellerman’s (2012) approach is to examine leaders, followers, and context as three sides of an equilateral triangle, each equally important, similar to Hollander’s (1992) view of leadership, consisting of “the leader, the follower and their situation” (p. 45).

Susan Baker. Susan Baker extends a theoretical foundation for the field of followership and examines the roots from which followership emerged in the United States in the 20th century management literature (Baker, 2007). Baker outlines the history and prevalence of the Great Man ideology throughout the era of industrial age; typical images of leaders as static authority figures with irrefutable power, and compliant,

submissive, and voiceless followers. She explains that while some researchers easily ascribe the nascence of followership to the works of Kelley (1988, 1992) and Chaleff's *The Courageous Follower* (the first edition became available in 1995), the early traces of followership go back decades earlier. Baker recognizes Hollander and Webb (1955) as the originators of the first work with which followership began in social sciences.

Baker further explains how throughout time, flattening of organizations, and demand for reliable and competitive workforce, the images of weak complacent followers gradually evolved into active participative followers equally contributing to the common goals of organizations. She summed up the four principal components of active followership theory: (a) followers and leaders are roles rather than individuals displaying inherent characteristics; (b) followers are active, not passive; (c) followers and leaders strive toward a common purpose; and (d) followers and leaders must be studied together (Baker, 2007).

Baker, Mathis, & Stites-Doe (2011) conducted a study among U.S. healthcare organizations to test (a) the ability of healthcare professionals to shift roles from being a follower to being a leader, and (b) the assumption that leader and follower behaviors are related and overlapping. The results of the study revealed: (a) followers in the sample appeared to exhibit characteristics common to good leaders; (b) followers identified themselves as possessing the characteristics of both: exemplary leader and effective follower; and (c) followers identified themselves as possessing such attributes of effective followers as embracing change, performing the job, and working with others (Baker et al., 2011). Thus, the findings of the study proposed that “specific leader

behaviors are positively associated with desired characteristics that one would hope to find in effective followers” (Baker et al., 2011, p. 357).

Ira Chaleff: Courageous Followership. Ira Chaleff (2009) assures that the application of courageous followership and related models of exemplary followership, dynamic followership, or followership of conscience began in 1995 since the first edition of his book, *The Courageous Follower* (p. xiii). Chaleff (2009) explicates that “courage is so antithetical to the prevailing image of followers and so crucial to balancing the relationship with leaders” (p. 4). He continues:

Courageous followership is built on the platform of courageous relationship. The courage to be right, the courage to be wrong, the courage to be different from each other. Each of us sees the world through our own eyes and experiences. Our interpretation of the world thus differs. In relationships, we struggle to maintain the validity of our own interpretation while learning to respect the validity of other interpretations. (Chaleff, 2009, p. 4)

Chaleff’s (2009) approach is to equalize the follower’s role with the leader’s role as leaders rarely use their power wisely or effectively unless they are surrounded by followers who supportively encourage them to do so. Chaleff’s model of courageous followership incorporates seven dimensions with the last two added to the original five-dimensional model in the third edition of his book:

1. The courage to assume responsibility. The followers do not expect the leader to assume all the responsibility for themselves and the organization. Instead, they do it: assume responsibility for themselves and the organization.
2. The courage to serve. The followers do not shy away from additional responsibilities and work to facilitate the leader’s role en route to their common purpose.
3. The courage to challenge. The followers do not hesitate to voice their concerns should behaviors or actions of the leader or group members contradict the ethical norms.

4. The courage to participate in transformation. The followers actively engage in the change process in congruence with the organizational purposes.
5. The courage to take moral action. The followers are not afraid to speak up in a situation where their stand differs from that of a leader.
6. The courage to speak to the hierarchy.
7. The courage to listen to followers.

Chaleff (2009) asserts:

Follower is not synonymous with subordinate. A subordinate reports to an individual of higher rank and may in practice be a supporter, an antagonist, or indifferent. A follower shares a common purpose with the leader, believes in what the organization is trying to accomplish, wants both the leader and organization to succeed, and works energetically to this end. (p. 15)

Mark Van Vugt: Evolutionary Perspective. Van Vugt (2006), Van Vugt, Hogan and Kaiser (2008), and Gillet, Cartwright, and Van Vugt (2011) approach the concepts of leadership and followership from an evolutionary standpoint, examining early human and non-human societies. They contend that both leadership and followership phenomena evolved in ancient times for solving social coordination dilemmas, such as “group movement, intra-group peacekeeping and intergroup competition” (Van Vugt et al., 2008, p. 182). They further allege:

Given the fitness and reproductive benefits associated with social status (Betzig, 1993; Buss, 2005; Chagnon, 1997), the “selfish-gene” view of evolution (Dawkins, 1976) suggests that everyone should strive to become a leader. From this same perspective it is not obvious why some would voluntarily subordinate themselves. Researchers rarely consider the origins of followership, but the topic is central to an evolutionary analysis. (Van Vugt et al., 2008, p. 182)

Van Vugt et al. (2008) study a leader–follower dichotomy relying on an application of an evolutionary lens, stating that humans evolved as animals living as a group and progressed as they adapted to hunter-food-gathering life style (p. 183). They believe that this mechanism of going back to basics of early human and non-human

societies serves as a vehicle for understanding leadership–followership relationship for such scholars as educational psychologists, anthropologists, zoologists, and many others (p. 183).

Similarity of Leader and Follower Attributes

Research suggests that followers’ attributes are the same as leaders’ (Baker et al., 2011; Hemphill & Coons, 1950; Hollander, 1992; Kelley, 1988; Kellerman, 2008; Lundin & Lancaster, 1990; Nolan & Harty, 1984; Stogdill & Coons, 1957). Nolan and Harty (1984) affirm that leader behavior traits proposed by Hemphill and Coons (1950) in their Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire “are obviously essential to good followership: making attitudes clear, maintaining standards of performance, informing others as to what is expected of them, treating all as equals, being friendly and approachable and accepting suggestions of others” (p. 311). Other attributes of good followership, such as intelligence, cooperativeness, diplomacy and sociability, as introduced by Stogdill and Coons (1957), are also viewed as traits of leadership.

Nolan and Harty (1984) believe that followership attributes are the same as leadership attributes proposed by Giammatteo and Giammatteo (1981): “sensitivity, self-identification, listening ability, absence of ridicule, ability to communicate, understanding of the needs of others, recognition of everyone’s worth and willingness to share responsibility” (p. 311). As Nolan and Harty (1984) assert, “leadership and followership go hand in glove” and their attributes should be corresponding (p. 312).

According to Chaleff (2009), followers need to be self-inspired, motivated from within, cooperative, collaborative, caring, perceiving of the needs of both the leader and the other followers and many more (p. 19). Kellerman (2008) refrains from making a list

of follower attributes for two reasons: these lists should be situation specific—what is advisable for some followers in a particular context might be completely inappropriate for others in different circumstances; these lists would strongly resemble lists of attributes suggested for good leaders.

“Leadership Industry”

From a global perspective, the United States is considered to be the leading country in leadership research with an impressive number of leadership experts (Andriyanchenko, 2012). Over 32 research centers in the United States are devoted to the studies of the phenomenon of leadership and the number of academic contributions to the field has exceeded 7,000 (Andriyanchenko, 2012). This focused national attention on leadership explains easy access to leadership education and strikes even a larger contrast to limited followership education.

Leadership classes are widely offered both as primary and secondary courses to undergraduate and graduate students, as well as training sessions, workshops and conferences, corresponding to Gardner’s (1987) belief that 90% of leadership can be taught. One of the most popular and overenrolled courses at Harvard Business School is Authentic Leadership Development class (Goleman, 2013).

As Follett (1949) puts forth:

The man who thinks leadership cannot be learned will probably remain in a subordinate position. The man who believes it can be, will go to work and learn it. He may not ever be president of the company, but he can rise from where he is. (p. 58)

Follett (1949) further explains that such leadership skills as how and when to praise, how to properly address mistakes and failures, can certainly be learned; “the first thing to do is to discover what is necessary for leadership and then to try to acquire by

various methods those essentials” (p. 58). Heller and Van Til (1982) also contend that “leadership and followership may be arts in which people can become more highly skilled” (p. 411). Gardner (1990) claims: “Many dismiss the subject [of leadership development] with the confident assertion that ‘leaders are born not made.’ Nonsense! Most of what leaders have that enables them to lead is learned. Leadership is not a mysterious activity” (p. xix).

According to Kellerman (2008), after people became persuaded that leadership can be taught, the investment in leadership and education and development around 2005 had reached nearly \$50 billion, what she refers to as the “leadership industry” (p. xvii).

Kelley (2008) reflects:

Schools treat peer pressure as a leadership issue when actually it’s a followership issue. They believe that if they teach leadership skills, they will alleviate the negative effects of peer pressure. A better approach may be to teach better followership skills. (p. 12)

Scarcity of Followership Courses

The questions, “Are leaders born or made?” and “Can leadership skills be taught?” have been repeated in the past. Nevertheless, the questions, “Are great followers born or made?” and “Can followership skills be taught?” are not commonly heard. The latter question reflects the overall purpose of the study, and, more specifically: “What skills do individuals need to be taught?” Lundin and Lancaster (1990) lament: “Many companies have begun to meet organizational challenges by instituting leader-training programs. Only a few, however, are tackling the problem of followership” (p. 19). They further maintain that “successful followership requires skills and behaviors that must be learned and practiced before they are mastered” (p. 19).

While the first course on followership, called Followership and Leadership, was offered at Carnegie-Mellon University by Robert Kelley in 1985 (Kelley, 1992, p. 36), availability of such courses at other universities in the United States to this day remains limited. Some courses on leadership incorporate a section on followership into their curricula, but followership as a stand-alone course is slowly gaining its popularity in universities and corporations, such as Barbara Kellerman's followership course at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Riggio, Chaleff, and Lipman-Blumen (2008) explicate: "Only a handful of pioneering courses on followership exist, and the number of consultants and other experts who focus on followership... is miniscule in comparison to the vast and growing number of leadership experts" (p. 253).

Malakyan (2014) has conducted a quantitative analysis of the undergraduate residential leadership programs (53 majors and 17 minors) in the United States to determine whether followership constitutes a part of their curricula. Seventy universities (26 state, 19 private, and 25 faith affiliated institutions) were randomly selected out of 200 programs listed in the Directory of Leadership Programs by the International Leadership Association (ILA, 2014). Out of 70 institutions, not a single one had a course on followership or had followership mentioned in the program descriptions.

Reflecting on his experience teaching followership, Kelley (1992) states:

Organizations need more and more exemplary followers. Yet followership skills had traditionally been neglected. So I decided to try to teach these skills to students, knowing that upon graduation they would play the followership role sooner and longer than the leadership role. (p. 36)

It is puzzling that although courses on followership to this day appear to be a luxury, their importance was recognized over three decades ago. Followership courses are not currently widespread in every organization, they are offered selectively and

exclusively in education and law enforcement fields, “in the private and public sectors, among clergy and military officers” (Chaleff, 2009, p. xiii; 2013). Lundin and Lancaster (1990) insist on the importance of hiring and training for followership: “Skills that empower followers such interpersonal communication, problem solving, coping with change, and conflict management must be taught” (p. 22).

Conclusion

Followership has traditionally been neglected and understudied in the leadership literature (Adair, 2008; Baker, 2007; Bjugstad et al., 2006; Brumm & Drury, 2013; Carsten et al., 2010; Cox III et al., 2010; Kellerman, 2008; Kelley, 2008; Lundin & Lancaster, 1990; Riggio et al., 2008; Sy, 2010; Tee et al., 2013; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). Despite various evolving perspectives on followership, scholars are “just scratching the surface of a true understanding of the role that followers play in leadership and in understanding the dynamics of the leader–follower equation” (Riggio et al., 2008, p. 254). Negative connotations historically accompanying the term follower may be viewed as one explanation to the fact that little research has been done in the field. Starting in 2006, the International Leadership Association conducts global annual conferences, where focused attention is given to the growing area of followership.

An impressive amount of research has been devoted to examining leadership and followership as a harmonious unity, where one component is inconceivable without the other (Adair, 2008; Baker et al., 2011; Chaleff, 2009, 2010; Cox III et al., 2010; Heller & Van Til, 1982; Hollander, 1992, 2013; Hollander & Offermann, 1990; Gardner, 1987; Lundin & Lancaster, 1990; Prilipko et al., 2011; Riggio et al., 2008; Rost, 1991; 1995; Sy, 2010; Tee et al., 2013; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

This chapter's thorough focus on resistance to followership and negative connotation of the term sheds light to understanding of the word followers as condescending and offensive by many. As a consequence, such alternatives to the word followers as participants, constituents, disciples, members, collaborators, colleagues, associates, and partners are introduced. A review of leadership theories that incorporate various degrees of the followers' importance is presented. The importance of the most prominent works on followership is illuminated, and different stands on follower attributes are provided. The chapter is concluded by a comparison of the plethora of leadership courses with painful dearth of courses on followership.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Importance of This Research

From an etymological standpoint, the word *research* comes from the French *recherché*, with its meaning “to search after, to investigate,” and, by definition, is a “1. careful or diligent search; 2. studious inquiry or examination ” (Merriam-Webster, 2013). Mertler and Charles (2005) emphasize the three core elements of research: it is thorough, systematic, and patient. The scholars clarify that the process of research is not a speedy reference to a book, but rather a careful process of a problem examination when the answer to it is not readily available.

Antelo (2012) affirms that research “is a passion-based undertaking. Producing an idea can be a joyful activity filled with powerful motivational forces requiring its producer the development of a desire for testing it through a systematic research process” (p. 1). Gay et al. (2009) insist that “researchers creatively combine the elements of methods in any way that makes the best sense for the study they want to do” (p. 462).

According to Creswell (2008), research is a process of steps taken to collect and analyze data to enhance an overall understanding of a topic. In a broad sense, research consists of three building blocks: posing a question, collecting data to answer the question, and presenting an answer to the identified question. In general, research is important in three essential ways: (a) it adds to the body of existing knowledge, (b) it informs policy debates, and (c) it suggests improvements for current practices (Creswell, 2008).

Adding to the body of existing knowledge. Current research aims to enhance the body of existing knowledge by identifying attributes perceived by followership and

leadership experts as important to be taught to individuals to enhance their follower skills. It adds to the existing followership literature in the ways that have not been previously partaken: (a) it enriches the literature on followership by offering a set of views of experts on the topic, (b) it opens a new perspective that could be taught to students in academic settings, (c) it offers a new outlook at leader–follower dynamic that could be taught to individuals to enhance their skills as followers in organizations.

Informing policy debates. Current research has a potential of informing policy debates in a way of assisting educators, specifically in the field of organizational studies, to become better practitioners. In this sense, this study offers a potential of extending research results that may facilitate current practices and offer new insights to existing perspectives on teaching leadership and followership.

Improving current practices. Armed with the results of current research, practitioners and other educators can use them in their teaching practices, challenge their existing views on the subject, apply the findings of the study to their own specific situations in classroom or organizational settings, as well as draw new conclusions. This research may facilitate and/or stimulate improvement of their job practices to scholars and practitioners.

Research Strategy

The purpose of this study is to identify the most important characteristics to be exhibited by individuals in the follower role as perceived by followership and leadership experts in the United States. This chapter will present the methodology and research strategies used to collect data. It will clarify the steps taken to collect, organize, analyze, and interpret data.

Uhl-Bien et al. (2013) assert that “followership is theorized as a multi-paradigmatic framework” and encourage researchers to rely on a wide range of paradigmatic perspectives to advance the study of followership (p. 100). The current study favors qualitative method of conducting research as the researcher is concerned with exploring the experts’ perceptions on the essence of followership and follower attributes. This approach is the appropriate research mechanism to guide the study as it will supply the study with the “‘in-depth’ material which is believed to be absent from survey research data” (Miller & Dingwall, 1997, p. 14).

Qualitative research method will serve as a mechanism for conducting this study “simply and transparently” (Holliday, 2007, p. 15). It will serve a contextual function, offering an opportunity to “unpack issues, to see what they are about or what lies inside, and to explore how they are understood by those connected with them” (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003, p. 27). The current study is exploratory, which means that literature on the topic is limited. Thus, the researcher’s intention is to interview participants and construct an understanding based on their opinions.

Origin and brief history of development of qualitative research. From etymological standpoint, *qualitas* in Latin refers to a “focus on the qualities, the features of entities,” while *quantitas* denotes “differences in amount” (Erickson, 2011, p. 43). Precursors to qualitative inquiry go as far back as to writings of a Greek scholar Herodotus in the 5th century B.C.E. and Greek philosopher Sextus Empiricus in the 2nd century C.E, as well as Aristotle’s descriptive works on physics and Galen’s accounts on medicine (Erickson, 2011, p. 43).

It has traditionally been a belief that quantitative research paradigm is the primary method of conducting research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Similar to leadership and followership inequality, qualitative research has been underestimated and neglected. “Frequently dismissed as ‘anecdotal’ by its detractors, qualitative research has often turned inward, addressing its own community of believers, who choose their own, less global, more locally focused means to effect social change” (Lincoln & Denzin, 2011, p. 717).

As time progressed, in the early 1970s qualitative research was still very rare, but by the early 1990s, qualitative research had become commonly used both in humanities and science (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Since the 1990s the number of published qualitative methods textbooks is gradually increasing and the method is being applied in a wide range of academic spheres (Berg and Lune, 2012; Creswell, 2003; Flick, Kardorff, & Steinke, 2004; Holliday, 2007; Seale, Giampietro, Gubrium, & Silverman, 2004).

A qualitative researcher is also referred to as a “scientist, naturalist, fieldworker, journalist, social critic, artist, performer, jazz musician, filmmaker, quilt maker, essayist” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 4). All these terms imply a meaning that a qualitative researcher collects pieces of data to carefully analyze and put together similar to a quilt or mosaic. The French term *bricoleur* has been used to denote a qualitative researcher as a Jack-of-all-trades, one who has collected data and found a creative approach to analyze, interpret it, and derive meanings in his own unique ways (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Hammersley, 2004; Holliday, 2007), one who “puts slices of reality together” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 5).

Definition and the process of qualitative research. Qualitative research, as a constructivist approach, is designed to understand processes, describe poorly understood phenomena, and shed light into unpredictable areas of exploration. Holliday (2007) compares the process of qualitative research with the process of creating art, rather than producing a concrete “photograph of what is ‘really’ there” (p. 7) more applicable to a quantitative paradigm. He metaphorically portrays qualitative research process to being a foreigner in a different country, carefully observing a new culture, immersing and understanding the reality as it is constructed by residents of that country. One major characteristic of a well-collected qualitative data is that it is focused on “*naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings* [emphasis in original], so that we have a strong handle on what ‘*real life*’ [emphasis in original] is like” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 10).

Qualitative research enables a researcher to create an intimate relationship between a researcher and the essence of what is being studied. As opposed to a matter-of-fact, rigid, and business-like quantitative paradigm, qualitative research is rather emotional, fluid, soft, flexible, warm and pliable. One should not fall into a trap of an assumption that qualitative research is rules-free game. By no means. Qualitative research calls for strong analytical skills, ability to decipher and segregate collected data into organized and clear-cut categories, ability to approach data as a large piece of play dough and transform it into a meaningful final product.

Qualitative research is interpretive in nature. Researcher is the primary instrument and makes an interpretation of the collected data. The researcher analyzes the data for themes or categories, draws conclusions, and proposes suggestions for further research.

Analysis of the data is inductive, and the end product is richly descriptive. When the researcher interprets the data, he/she applies a personal perspective, training, knowledge, and all the biases and baggage that accompany him (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Klenke, 2008). As Creswell (2003) explains: “One cannot escape the personal interpretation brought to qualitative data analysis” (p. 182). Weber (1968) maintained that “all research is contaminated to some extent by the values of the researcher. Only through those values do certain problems get identified and studied in particular ways” (Silverman, 2000, p. 200).

Research Design

The grounded theory approach is used in the study to inductively derive a theory that is “grounded” in data from perspectives of the leadership and followership experts on followership attributes (Creswell, 2008; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Merriam & Associates, 2002). Interviews were conducted to explore the perceptions of seven leadership and followership experts on the importance and teachability of the attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010).

Interviews. As Oakley (1981) noted, “Interviewing is rather like a marriage: everybody knows what it is, an awful lot of people do it, and yet behind each closed front door there is a world of secrets” (p. 41). Schostak (2006) warns that an interview should not be perceived as a tool to extract information with. “It is a place where views may clash, deceive, seduce, enchant. It is the inter-view” (p. 1). Interviews are an extraordinary opportunity to learn about the world view of another individual, that allow a researcher to enter that fragile world of another, learn, and tip toe away from it. Interviews are precious in that they provide one with an official access to enter the

treasury, carry out as many jewels as one can carry, close the door, and cherish the jewels of that new knowledge that one was so generously granted access to.

Schostak (2006) defines an interview as a process of individuals “directing their attention towards each other with the purpose of opening up the possibility of gaining an insight into the experiences, concerns, interests, beliefs, values, knowledge and ways of seeing, thinking and acting of the other” (p. 10). Thus, our study is concerned with obtaining the views of leadership and followership experts, based on their knowledge and vast academic experience.

In-depth interviews. As the name implies, in-depth interaction “seeks ‘deep’ information and understanding”; the interviewer seeks to obtain the same level of information as the participants (Johnson, 2002, p. 106). For the purpose of the study, the research sought in-depth interviews, “*meaning-making partnerships* [emphasis in original]” (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006), as the most appropriate type of data collection for the method of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2002; Johnson, 2002; Klenke, 2008; Warren, 2002).

Charmaz (2002) advises to explore during the interviewing, but not to question the participants. Thus, the researcher was particularly interested in informants’ opinions based on their lived experiences, academic examples, and expertise. “To be effective and useful, in-depth interviews develop and build on intimacy; in this respect, they resemble the forms of talking one finds among close friends. They resemble friendship, and they may even lead to long-term friendship” (Johnson, 2002, p. 104).

In-depth interviews were the most desired form of data collection as study participants, although all involved in the same field of leadership and followership, all

being members of the International Leadership Association and/or Followership Learning Community, each had multiple perspectives on the same phenomenon: followership and follower attributes.

The roots of the grounded theory. After the grounded theory was founded and introduced by Glaser and Strauss in 1967, the authors developed different views about the nature of the strategy which they originally proposed. That disagreement caused them to part and to continue their academic endeavors individually. As Dey (2004) alleged: “there is no such thing as ‘grounded theory’ if we mean by that a single, unified methodology, tightly defined and clearly specified. Instead, we have different interpretations of grounded theory.” (p. 80).

Thus, among references to the grounded theory, there are references to: (a) Glaser and Strauss (1967), (b) Strauss and Corbin (1997), and (c) Charmaz (2002; 2004; 2011). The Strauss and Corbin tandem has gained the most popularity and became synonymous with the concept of grounded theory (Miller & Dingwall, 1997). Glaser explicated the difference between their views. Strauss’ methodology is based on conceptual description, focusing on forcing, whereas Glaser’s is grounded theory, which focuses on emerging (Miller & Dingwall, 1997). Glaser and Strauss’ 1967 debut was *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. It was their official approach to interpreting qualitative data in the early 1960s during participant observation of patients by hospital staff (Creswell, 2008; Locke, 2001). Glaser and Strauss’ pioneering book became the foundation of the grounded theory and continues to serve as a guide to research that is grounded in collected data.

Since then, the grounded theory approach has persisted, became one of the most influential and widely used models of conducting a qualitative study, and transferred from its original use by sociologists to the other domains of study ranging from psychology to education and organization studies (Locke, 2001; Strauss & Corbin, 1997). Denzin and Lincoln (2011) concur that “grounded theory may be the most widely employed interpretive strategy in the social sciences today” and purport that “constructive grounded theory will be a method for the 21st century” (p. 248).

The essence of the grounded theory. Grounded theory, as viewed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), is “the discovery of theory from data” (p. 1). In grounded theory, a researcher’s intention is to listen closely to participants’ responses and derive a general theory grounded in the views of the subjects of the study. The overall purpose of a grounded theory is to generate a theory to explain a process that the existing theories fail to explain (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Creswell, 2008; Flick et al., 2004). Thus, in the process of interviewing leadership and followership experts, the primary investigator’s intention is to unveil their opinions on teaching followership and the attributes that they find as most critical to be exhibited by individuals in the follower role. The rationale for relying on qualitative data for the study is to better understand a research problem by analyzing the data obtained, and arriving at a set of attributes that can be recommended as a tool for enhancing individuals’ skills in the follower capacity.

Bohm (2004) contends that grounded theory is art and “its procedure cannot be learned in the form of prescriptions” (p. 270). Glaser and Strauss (1967) allege that grounded theory can be presented as a set of propositions, or as a theoretical discussion. They view it rather as a developing theory, as a “*theory as process* [emphasis in

original],” not as a “perfected product” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 32). They also distinguish between substantive and formal theories. By substantive theory they mean a theory that developed for an empirical area of sociological inquiry, such as professional education, patient care, or race relations. By formal theory they mean a theory that developed for a formal, or conceptual form of inquiry, such as authority and power, deviant behavior, etc.

Charmaz (2011) explains grounded theory as “a method of qualitative inquiry in which data collection and analysis reciprocally inform and shape each other through an emergent iterative process” (p. 360). Thus, grounded theory is understood as both method and a final product. It is a theory that evolves out of successive analysis of data. When constructing a grounded theory, researchers shift back and forth between analysis and data collection since these processes are mutually connected and informative. Among important elements required for grounded theorizing are “imaginative interpretations,” “rigorous examination of data,” and “analytic precision” (Charmaz, 2011, p. 361).

Three versions of grounded theory. Three versions of grounded theory are: (a) constructivist, (b) objectivist, and (c) postpositivist (Charmaz, 2011, pp. 364-365). Constructivist grounded theory, or constructive–interpretive approach (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006), the approach that current study relies on, incorporates relativity and reflexivity into the research process, thus loosening a strict positivist approach and welcoming the role and views of the researcher into play. “Constructivist grounded theory views knowledge as located in time, space, and situation and takes into account the researcher’s construction of emergent concepts” (Charmaz, 2011, p. 365). Current study is rooted in constructivism as it assumes that the reality constructed by its

participants is subjective and their individual standpoints are not representative of the objective social reality (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006).

Objectivist grounded theory emphasizes researcher's neutrality, focuses on emergent themes, and aims for generalizations devoid of time, place, or specific individuals. Postpositivist grounded theory falls in between the two approaches as it "applies preconceived coding and analytic frameworks to apply to data" (Charmaz, 2011, p. 365).

The constant comparative method. The key characteristics of grounded theory are the constant comparison of data with emerging categories and theoretical sampling (Creswell, 2003; Klenke, 2008). In grounded theory research, the inquirer collects data, sorts into categories, and compares new information with emerging categories. This process of gradually emerging categories is known as constant comparative process. The overall goal is to ground the emerging categories in the data. After the major categories from the data are identified, the inquirer narrows down a core category "as the central phenomenon for the theory" (Creswell, 2008, p. 444).

Glaser and Strauss (1967) explained the primary rule for the constant comparative method: *"while coding an incident for a category, compare it with the previous incidents in the same and different groups coded in the same category [emphasis in original]"* (p. 106).

Theoretical sampling. Theoretical sampling of different groups is a procedure that enables the researcher to maximize similarities and differences of the collected data.

Theoretical sampling is the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as

it emerges. The process of data collection is controlled by the emerging theory, whether substantive or formal. (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 45)

The researcher constantly returns to the data sources to verify information until the theory is fully developed. Theoretical sampling takes place after the initial data collection and analysis. The purpose of theoretical sampling is theory construction (Charmaz, 2011, p. 363).

Population and Sample

The principle of purposive sampling was applied to selecting subjects for this qualitative study. “Purposive sampling is precisely what the name suggests. Members of a sample are chosen with a ‘purpose’ to represent a location or type in relation to a key criterion” (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 79). As Silverman (2000) warrants, purposive sampling obliges the researcher to carefully determine the parameters of the population and choose their sample accordingly. Generalization is not the purpose of qualitative research; the inquirer is rather concerned with in-depth understanding of a selected phenomenon. This explains why small size samples are appropriate (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006).

A sample chosen for the study represents information-rich cases. “*Information-rich cases* [emphasis in original] are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term *purposeful* [emphasis in original] sampling” (Patton, 1990, p. 169). Therefore, seven leadership and followership experts from the United States were chosen to be interviewed for the study. They were selected based on their unique educational expertise in the fields of followership and leadership, extensive research in these areas, and professional publications. With followership being a field of research of about several decades, the

number of followership and leadership experts is relatively small. Thus, having seven representatives from an overall population of leadership and followership scholars is a sufficient number that, therefore, adds to the overall credibility of the study.

Protection of Human Subjects and Ethical Considerations

One fundamental ethical principal is that “the researcher must do whatever is necessary ‘to protect research subjects’ and one interpretation of this statement is that “the researcher should do what is necessary to *protect the specific individuals who have assisted him or her in the research, as individuals* [emphasis in original]” (Johnson, 2002, p. 115). That implies that the researcher is obliged to take all the necessary steps to protect the individuals who so kindly have cooperated in the research from any potential harm or misuse of the information that they generously shared. As Charmaz (2002) suggests: “[the participants’] comfort should be of higher priority for the interviewer than obtaining juicy data” (p. 679).

“Another issue concerning the protection of research informants is whether researchers should feel any obligation to avoid causing harm to the reputation, social standing, or social prestige of their informants’ professions, occupations, communities, or groups *as collectives* [emphasis in original]”(Johnson, 2002, p. 115). Although predicting such consequences is an extremely difficult task, the researcher needs to be aware of the risk of such harm.

It is essential to adequately prepare subjects for interviews in relation to what will be required of them as well as the nature of the topics that will be covered. Following the guidelines for protection of human subjects, before the data were collected, the researcher obtained permission from the Institutional Review Board of the University of the

Incarnate Word. Participation in this study was completely voluntary as it was emphasized to participants in the informed consent form.

The consent form (Appendix B) provided to participants outlined the researcher's intentions, the purpose of the study and how the data would be used, as well as respondents' rights, benefits, and risks involved in the course of investigation. In accordance with the right to privacy (protecting the identity of the subject) (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998), options outlined in the informed consent form provided participants with (a) a preference to have their names revealed for academic and publishing purposes, or (b) full confidentiality of their responses and complete anonymity.

“Confidentiality means avoiding the attribution of comments, in reports or presentations, to identified participants” (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 67). “Anonymity means the identity of those taking part not being known outside the research team” (p. 67). As Creswell (2008) explains, participants have a right to gain benefits from the study for the time and expertise they freely provided, and the researcher ought to seek for all means possible to reciprocate. Seven study participants indicated a preference towards disclosing their identities and expert opinions.

Data Collection Procedures

Letters inviting the interviewees to participate in the study, explaining the purpose of the study and a proposition to meet during the conference were sent electronically. The researcher met with six leadership and followership experts at the International Leadership Association Global Annual Conference in Montreal, Canada, where they were interviewed in person at the time selected by the interviewees during a four-day period, October 30th through November 2nd, 2013. Each in-depth individual interview session

lasted between one and two hours and was audio-taped. One leadership–followership expert was not able to attend the conference and graciously agreed to be interviewed over the telephone.

Main (or essential) questions, probing questions, and follow-up questions are suggested for in-depth interviewing (Berg & Lune, 2012; Klenke, 2008). Before the first question is asked, it is critical to create rapport with the interviewees. Currer (1983) notes that establishing rapport between participants and interviewer might be even more important than the purpose of the research. Thus, to achieve rapport development, the researcher started by describing the nature of research, the purpose of the study, and answered participants' questions that were primarily related to the type of answers that would be most helpful for the study.

With the exception of the phone interview participant, the researcher provided the study participants with a printed interview protocol for their visual convenience. Once permission was received from the subject to start the recording process, the researcher proceeded to do so by means of digital voice recorders. As Charmaz (2002) suggests: "Questions must both explore the interviewer's topic and fit the participant's experience. ... questions must be sufficiently general to cover a wide range of experiences as well as narrow enough to elicit and explore the participant's specific experience" (p. 679).

After the recording had begun, the researcher introduced or asked the participant to introduce him/herself. This allowed for a smooth transition into the actual interview process.

As Fontana and Frey (2000) allege:

The spoken or written word has always a residue of ambiguity, no matter how carefully we word the questions and how carefully we report or code the answers.

Yet, the interview is one of the most common and most powerful ways in which we can understand our fellow human being. (p. 645)

The interview process followed a “funnel” approach, in which broad questions gradually narrow down to a very specific targeted issue (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 102). The initial general unstructured questions (buttressed by probing questions) related to followership were designed to foment spontaneous responses. These general questions asked interviewees for their views on scarcity of followership courses in the curricula and their opinions on the reasons why followership courses are not commonly offered as a part of academic curricula. Structured (main) questions were designed to ask the subjects to express their opinions regarding the importance of follower attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010) and their teachability, in congruence with the research questions of the study.

In addition, the researcher added “contrast” (follow-up) questions by asking participants to reflect on the skills that *cannot* be taught to individuals. Collected data was inductively analyzed to determine recurring patterns or common themes that emerged across the data. Findings were presented by means of a grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Locke, 2001; Merriam & Associates, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1997).

Data Analysis Procedures

Analysis is a process of examining a limited amount of information in order to derive a meaning of what its significance is (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Analysis is a very dynamic process, requiring a researcher to apply and eliminate different ideas, approach data from different angles, and expand upon selected ideas before arriving at final conclusions. In qualitative research analysis begins with the collection of the first piece of data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

The overall process of qualitative data analysis can be understood as an interlinked cluster of three elements: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Berg & Lune, 2012; Miles & Huberman, 1994), as presented in Figure 1. All the components are integrated parts of one whole. They are interlocked and continue to develop as a cycle until full completion of the study.

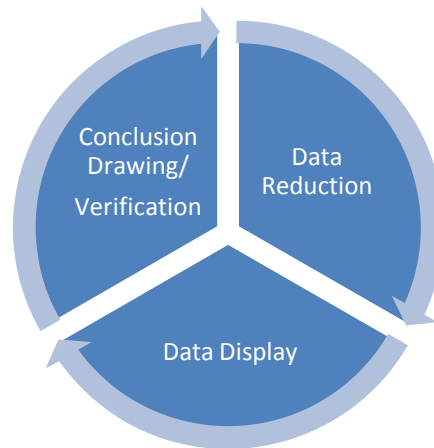


Figure 1. The process of qualitative data analysis.

Data reduction. Data reduction is a part of analysis that facilitates the process of sorting, shaping, and organizing the qualitative data. Data reduction can be viewed as a selective process in which the researcher carefully narrows down the data into pieces of information that are gradually transformed into a final report. Data reduction can occur by such means as the actual process of collecting data, coding, organizing, and selecting themes, making clusters and patterns of data and others.

Data display. Data display is an organized way to display information in a concise and simplified way (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Data displays facilitate the researchers in condensing large amounts of data into easily understood presentations of conclusions. They can be represented by matrices, graphs, charts and other forms of creative schemes. When the words “get too wordy,” (J. Kimmel, personal

communication, January 6, 2014), all sorts of graphical devices come to the rescue of the qualitative researcher. In some ways, data displays also serve as means of data reduction and constitute a part of data analysis.

Conclusion drawing and verification. Although the process of conclusion drawing may begin very early in the data analysis process, it needs to mature throughout the process of all data analysis, and, more importantly, it needs to be verified. Conclusions need to be confirmed, which proves the overall validity of the study. “Otherwise, we are left with interesting stories about what happened, of unknown truth and utility” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 11).

Role of the Researcher

In order to identify the researcher’s perspective that may influence data analysis, and to support readers’ understanding of potential bias, information about the researcher is included. The researcher’s contribution to the research setting can be rather instrumental and enriching rather than detrimental. Moreover, in the qualitative study, the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection (Creswell, 2008).

The researcher is a doctoral student with concentration in Organizational Leadership. She has served as a graduate research assistant, engaged in research on various aspects of leadership, leadership attributes, followership and followership attributes, and others. The researcher’s academic exposure to the concept of leadership started in the mid 1990s when she earned her Master’s degrees in Education and Global Economy/International Relations. Her passion for research evolved into a closer bond with leadership and followership with her subsequent Master’s degree in Organizational Communication and Development.

The researcher's practical experience in working closely with colleagues in educational settings and hospitality industry is manifested in serving a dual role of a leader and follower. When working with teams, the researcher's quest began as: "What can be done to enhance individuals' skills to become better contributors to the organization? What knowledge needs to be provided to individuals that would allow them to reveal their talents to the greatest potential?" This quest, undergirded in work experience and fortified by years of graduate research focused on the follower component of the leadership paradigm, has propelled the researcher to embark on the current study.

Credibility, Validity, Reliability

Researchers aspire to offer credible, valid, and reliable knowledge, fastened by ethical considerations. Both researchers and their audience are interested in research that is trustworthy. "We owe it to ourselves and our audiences to generate reliable data and valid observations" (Miller & Dingwall, 1997, p. 25). Trustworthiness of research integrates well with ethical conduct of research. Measures ensuring that a study was conducted in a rigorous, ethical, and therefore, trustworthy manner are further discussed.

Credibility. The term *credibility* is centered on the idea that the readers can have confidence in the presented data and their interpretation. "The focus is on the trust which can be placed in the accuracy of data and the process by which it was acquired, the sense that it is believable and confidence can be placed in it" (Howell Major & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 179). Credibility is viewed as a commensurable fit between "respondents' views of their life ways and the inquirer's reconstruction and representation of same" (Schwandt, 2001, p. 258). The most appropriate measures for establishing credibility are known to be *member check* and *peer debriefing* (Schwandt, 2001, p. 259).

Member check implies the process of “soliciting feedback from respondents on the inquirer’s findings” (Schwandt, 2001, p. 155). This procedure is performed for confirmation purposes: a researcher presents a respondent with findings and a respondent verifies their accuracy. Member checks with the seven leadership and followership experts were conducted electronically. The seven subjects were provided with a copy of the interview transcript to verify the researcher’s interpretations for accuracy.

Peer debriefing process is a procedure of consulting with trusted and knowledgeable colleagues who are not directly involved in the research in relation to experiences encountered in the research field. Peer debriefing may provoke new ideas and provide a researcher with advice and experience of other researchers (Klenke, 2008; Merriam & Associates, 2002; Schwandt, 2001). The researcher consulted with experts, specializing in qualitative research.

Validity. Silverman (2000) finds *validity* to be “another word for truth” (p. 175). Schwandt (2001) indicates that a statement, argument, or procedures are valid if they are “sound, cogent, well grounded, justifiable, or logically correct” (p. 267). He contends that in order to argue that findings of a study are valid, means that they must be “true and certain” (p. 267). He further explains:

Here, “true” means that the findings accurately represent the phenomena to which they refer and “certain” means that the findings are backed by evidence—or warranted—and there are no good grounds for doubting the findings, or the evidence for the findings in question is stronger than the evidence for alternative findings. (Schwandt, 2001, p. 267)

Reliability. Reliability and validity are intertwined (Creswell, 2008; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Mertler & Charles, 2005). As Mertler and Charles (2005) assert, validity and reliability should not be perceived as two free-standing units; instead, “they share an

important relationship” (p. 151). According to Schwandt (2001), a study is considered to be reliable if it can be “replicated by another inquirer” (p. 226). In his opinion, the foundation of reliability is in constructing dependable evidence and referring to the proper methods used to develop that evidence. Schwandt (2001) is persuaded, however, that some scholars have serious doubts regarding reliability in qualitative studies since “no investigator can ever literally replicate another’s fieldwork” (p. 227).

Summary

In this chapter, a grounded theory approach in conducting this research was presented. The research questions, the process of data collection and importance of ethical considerations and protection of human subjects were described. The importance of current research was explained in three essential ways: adding to the body of existing knowledge on follower attributes, enabling educators in the field of organizational studies to become better practitioners, and the ways that educators can use the results of current research in their practices of teaching leadership and followership. The chapter was concluded with explanations on importance of credibility, validity, and reliability of research.

Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction

This chapter reports the findings of this study and is organized into the following sections: (a) introduction of the setting and participants, (b) implementation of data collection and analysis procedures, (c) grounded theory narrative, and (d) summary of the grounded theory. The study was guided by the following research questions:

RQ 1: How can scarcity of followership courses in academic curricula be explained?

RQ 2: Can follower skills be taught?

RQ 3: At what academic levels should followership be taught?

RQ 4: What skills need to be taught to individuals to enhance their follower skills in the leadership process?

Setting and Data Collection

Seven participants were interviewed; six of them were interviewed face-to-face and one over the telephone. Letters inviting the leadership and followership scholars to participate in the study, explaining the purpose of the study, and proposing to meet for an interview were sent electronically to eight individuals. Seven replied. The researcher met with six leadership and followership experts at the International Leadership Association Global Annual Conference in Montreal, Canada, where they were interviewed in person at the time of their convenience during a four-day period, October 30th through November 2nd, 2013.

Each in-depth individual interview session lasted between one and two hours and was audio-taped. One leadership–followership expert was not able to attend the conference, but kindly agreed to a phone interview. With the exception of the participant

interviewed on the phone, the study participants were provided with a printed interview protocol for their visual convenience. Once all the participants' questions regarding the study were answered by the researcher and permission was received from the subjects to start the recording process, the researcher proceeded to do so by means of digital voice recorders.

Participants

This section describes seven participants of the study, as illustrated in Figure 2. Six face-to-face participants and one participant interviewed over the telephone expressed a preference to have their names revealed. They are introduced with the description of their education, research interests and major career accomplishments, and current areas of teaching and/or expertise.



Figure 2. Seven participants of the study.

Figure 2 presents the study participants by name and educational background in parentheses. Each of them has a unique background, but they all have one commonality—they are united by their interest, research, experience, and professional publications on leadership and followership.

Dr. Rob Koonce

Education. Rob Koonce holds a B.S. in Biology, B.A. in Chemistry and Psychology, MBA with an emphasis in Entrepreneurship, and a M.A. in Organizational Learning and Instructional Technologies. His Ed.D. is in Organizational Leadership.

Research interests and career achievements. Rob Koonce is the founder of an educational services agency committed to teaching, research, writing, and a long-term entrepreneurial initiative aimed at improving leader–follower relations in a wide variety of organizational contexts. He has served as the director of continuing education and professional development for a state organization, as a marketing consultant, as the chief executive of a small business, and as a medical researcher and educational trainer in pediatric metabolism. Rob’s works are published on subjects ranging from emotional intelligence to metabolic disease. He has delivered presentations on subjects ranging from business strategy to organizational leadership at various venues throughout the world.

Areas of expertise. Rob Koonce’s vast experience includes working with a wide variety of companies ranging in size from multinational corporations to small businesses across multiple industries. Areas of expertise include leader–follower relations, client relationship management, and driving institutional improvements. Rob is dedicated to furthering the cause of the Followership Learning Community and serving the International Leadership Association (ILA, 2014) in a variety of voluntary capacities.

Dr. Jean Lipman-Blumen

Education. Dr. Lipman-Blumen received her B.A. and M.A. at Wellesley College and Ph.D. at Harvard, where she studied under academic guidance of Talcott Parsons and Florence Kluckhohn in the Department of Social Relations for Interdisciplinary Social Science Studies.

Research interests and career achievements. Dr. Lipman-Blumen directed the Women's Research Program at the National Institute of Education, served as a Special Advisor to the White House's Domestic Policy staff under President Carter and was President of LBS International, Ltd., a management consulting and public policy firm. Her best known books are *The Connective Edge: Leading in an Interdependent World*, *Hot Groups: Seeding Them, Feeding Them, and Using Them to Ignite Your Organization*, and *The Allure of Toxic Leaders*. She has published seven books, three monographs, and more than 200 articles on leadership, crisis management, organizational behavior, and other areas. In 2010, she received the International Leadership Association's Lifetime Achievement Award, an award to distinct one's accomplishments in the development and enhancement of the leadership field over his/her lifetime.

Areas of teaching and expertise. Currently Dr. Lipman-Blumen serves as the Thornton F. Bradshaw Chair in Public Policy and Professor of Organizational Behavior at the Peter D. Drucker and Masatoshi Ito Graduate School of Management at the Claremont Graduate University where she is also the co-founding director of the Institute for Advanced Leadership Studies. Her current teaching interests include connective leadership in a diverse and interdependent world, leadership, achieving styles, crisis

management, organizational behavior, gender roles, “hot groups,” and the reasons why followers tolerate toxic leaders.

Ira Chaleff

Education. Ira holds a degree in Applied Behavioral Science and is a Board Certified Coach from the Center for Credentialing and Education.

Research interests and career achievements. Ira Chaleff is the founder and president of Executive Coaching and Consulting Associates. He helps individuals succeed in senior roles and provides supportive guidance that facilitates their further professional growth. He has published many articles, and Ira’s book, *The Courageous Follower: Standing Up To and For Our Leaders* has been translated into several languages. The book *The Art of Followership: How Great Followers Make Great Leaders and Organizations* Ira Chaleff co-edited with Ron Riggio and Jean Lipman-Blumen.

Consulting and areas of expertise. Ira serves as a coach, consultant, author, and speaker. As a coach, Ira works with executives and their teams to determine and improve their management styles and processes for further improvement. He designs programs for fostering individual and team growth and provides coaching to achieve desired organizational outcomes. Ira Chaleff speaks and conducts workshops across the globe on the critical relationships between leaders and followers. Ira is one of the founders of the International Leadership Association and he also serves as an adjunct faculty at Georgetown University Center for Professional Development.

Dr. Ron Riggio

Education. Dr. Ron Riggio received his B.A. in Psychology at Santa Clara University, M.A. in Psychology, and Ph.D. in Social/Personality Psychology at University of California.

Research interests and career achievements. Professor Riggio is the author of more than a dozen books and more than 100 research articles and book chapters in the areas of leadership, leadership development, charismatic and transformational leadership, organizational and social psychology. His most recent books are *Leadership Studies*, *Transformational Leadership*, *The Art of Followership* and *The Practice of Leadership*, and *The Art of Followership: How Great Followers Create Great Leaders and Organizations*. Dr. Riggio's most current discussions on the latest research from leadership scholars and organizational psychologists can be found on the experts' rubric of *Psychology Today*.

Areas of teaching and expertise. Dr. Ron Riggio has been serving as a professor of Leadership and Organizational Psychology and is a former Director of the Kravis Leadership Institute. His areas of expertise include human resources management, innovation, leadership, organizational psychology, and non-verbal communication. He is particularly interested in the effects of communication skills on managerial performance, non-verbal communication, effects of individual differences on non-verbal communication skills, as well as the role of individual differences in prediction of leadership and managerial potential.

Dr. Joanne Ciulla

Education. Dr. Joanne Ciulla's B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. are in Philosophy.

Research interests and career achievements. Dr. Ciulla was honored with the University of Richmond highest award for teaching in 2007 and in 2003 with the Outstanding Faculty Award from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. Dr. Ciulla's academic appointments have included the UNESCO Chair in Leadership Studies at the United Nations International Leadership Academy in Jordan and appointments at La Salle University, Harvard Business School, The Wharton School, University of Fort Hare in South Africa, and Oxford University. Among her books are *Ethics*, *The Heart of Leadership*, *The Working Life: The Promise and Betrayal of Modern Work*, *The Ethics of Leadership*, and the latest three-volume set *Leadership Ethics*.

Areas of teaching and expertise. One of the founding faculty members of the Jepson School, Dr. Ciulla teaches ethics, critical thinking, conflict resolution, and leadership in international contexts. She currently holds a visiting appointment with Nyenrode Universiteit in the Netherlands. Dr. Ciulla is particularly interested in leadership ethics, business ethics, international leadership, and the philosophy of work.

Dr. Gene Dixon

Education. Gene Dixon holds a B.S. in Material Engineering from Auburn University, MBA from Nova Southeastern University, and Ph.D. in Industrial and System Engineering and Engineering Management from the University of Alabama in Huntsville.

Research interests and career achievements. Dr. Dixon has authored multiple publications on followership component of the leadership process and is actively engaged in research concerning nuclear waste management, energy conservation, engineering

education, and leadership-focused processes. He is an active member of the International Leadership Association and has contributed a book chapter toward a book *The Art of Followership: How Great Followers Create Great Leaders and Organizations*.

Areas of teaching and expertise. Gene Dixon is specifically interested in the role of leaders and followers in the leadership process, quantitative methods of value based decision making, teams, trust, and culture. He serves as an associate professor at the University of East Carolina, where he currently teaches engineering professional practices, engineering economics, project management, engineering entrepreneurship, and other courses at the undergraduate level.

Dr. Barbara Kellerman

Education. Barbara Kellerman received her B.A. from Sarah Lawrence College, M.A. in Russian and East European Studies, Master of Philosophy and Ph.D. in Political Science from Yale University.

Research interests and career achievements. Dr. Kellerman was awarded a Danforth Fellowship and three Fulbright fellowships. She is the cofounder of the International Leadership Association and an author and editor of many books including *The End of Leadership*, *Leadership: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, *The Political Presidency: Practice of Leadership*, *Bad Leadership*, and *Followership*. Barbara Kellerman lectures across the globe and has authored numerous articles and reviews. She is currently working on a new book titled *Hard Times: Leadership in early 21st century America*. In 2010 she was given the Wilbur M. McFeeley award by the National Management Association for her pioneering work on leadership and followership.

Areas of teaching and expertise. A frequent leadership and followership blogger, Kellerman currently teaches leadership and followership courses at the Harvard Kennedy school of Business and is serving as a Visiting Professor of Business Administration at Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth in 2014.

Process of Data Analysis

This study relied on the constructivist approach (Charmaz, 2002; 2004) of developing a grounded theory, which “places priority on the phenomena of study and sees both data analysis as created from the shared experiences of researcher and participants and the researcher’s relationships with participants” (Charmaz, 2002, p. 677). Constructivists are concerned with the informants’ meanings and experiences and strive to penetrate inside their study participants’ accounts as closely as possible, relying on means of in-depth interviews. Constructivist approach takes into close consideration the researcher’s own reflections as she attempted to connect the data to

- specific time (the year of 2013, several years after the first followership conference took place);
- place (International Leadership Conference, a place where the most updated academic views on leadership and followership are presented and shared);
- culture (a culture consisting of academic circles, leadership and followership experts, researchers and aspiring scholars);
- context (professional learning environment).

Data analysis. Miles and Huberman (1994) affirm: “Coding is analysis” (p. 56). This section is focused primarily on the initial step of data analysis—open coding—while also recognizing the necessity of the other types of coding: theoretical coding (the second

step of assessing open codes and relating them to the theory), axial coding (applying another way of coding after the open coding is complete; this is necessary to regroup the original open codes), and selective coding (a later process of assessing developed codes into core categories for further processing) (Berg & Lune, 2012; Bohm, 2004; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Dey, 2004). Charmaz (2002) suggests that grounded theory coding should be at least a two-step process and include an open coding and one other. Corbin and Strauss (2008), however, emphasize:

No researcher should become so obsessed with following a set of coding procedures that the fluid and dynamic nature of qualitative analysis is lost. The analytic process, like any thinking process, should be relaxed, flexible, and driven by insight gained through interaction with data rather than being overly structured and based only on procedures. (p. 12)

Open/substantive coding. Substantive coding “refers to first-order coding closely related to data” (Dey, 2004, p. 80). Grounded theory coding strategy can be understood as the process of sorting and taking the data apart, categorizing it and ascribing specific names (codes) to these categories. If one went to a Container Store and purchased a number of storage containers to organize dry foods in a pantry in a systematic order, coding data in grounded theory would be akin to that. Different types of cereals would be in a cereal section, noodles and spaghetti would be in a separate pasta category, and oatmeal and quinoa would be in a porridge section.

Similar to the pantry necessity to organize dry foods in order to be able to find the required type for cooking later, collected data needs to be organized and coded accordingly for the ease of further use. Thus, before the coding is applied, all the data collected thus far can be compared to a general term of *food* in the kitchen pantry. After

the coding is applied, it can now, in Boyatzis' (1998) terms, "be seen" (p. 4). It can now be seen as different categories: pasta, cans, porridge, cereal, etc.

Although grounded theorists often rely on using gerunds to code actions and processes (Charmaz, 2011), current study used nouns and phrases, since collected data called for coding appropriate for topics and themes. In addition to that, as Charmaz (2011) explains: "the English language favors thinking in structures, topics, and themes rather than thinking in actions and processes" (p. 369). Thus, as shown in Appendix D, some codes developed in the process of data analysis were in-vivo codes (codes based on the actual words of informants rather than being coined by the researcher) (Corbin & Strauss, 2008): "increase in followership courses," "popularity of leadership courses," "negative connotations to followership," and "positive connotations to leadership."

Line-by-line coding may lead the researcher to discover unanticipated codes that may not have been explicitly overt during the interviews. One example of an unanticipated code that emerged during constant comparison in the process of data analysis was "the importance of listening to other people." The results of this discovery are fully presented in the section describing the participants' responses to the follower attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010).

As Glaser and Strauss (1967) confirm: "Coding need consists only of noting categories on margins, but can be done more elaborately (e.g., on cards)" (p. 106). "Coding gives the researcher leads to pursue in subsequent data collection" (Charmaz, 2011, p. 369). The use of simple codes is recommended for data analysis. As the amount of data escalates, the simplicity of codes will be helpful in its further analysis and will first allow a smooth transition from data to emergent themes, to a theory, and will

facilitate the overall process of moving further to completion. As Miles and Huberman (1994) summarize: “Codes are efficient data-labeling and data-retrieval devices. They empower and speed up analysis” (p. 65).

Appendix D provides an example of an open-coding procedure applied at the initial stages of the study. This example shows how the theory was derived from data, and serves as an auxiliary way to “convey credibility of the theory” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 229).

Theoretical sampling. After the substantive, theoretical, and axial coding processes were complete, the researcher proceeded to identify the theoretical categories. Theoretical sampling process was escorted by constant comparison, a vital companion of grounded theory. Appendix E provides an example of data matrix that emerged as a result of theoretical sampling. Three categories were produced:

1. Five themes emerged and appeared clear, inter-linked and logical, all related to the phenomenon of followership and its teachability.
2. Three of the participants revealed a distinct feature in common: they exhibited a negative attitude either to the term follower, or to another process, as will be explained in detail in the results section.
3. The respondents’ comments in relation to the 12 attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010) when summed up presented the following types: “I agree with the attribute,” “I highly agree with the attribute,” “I suggest that this attribute is somewhat re-worded or re-defined,” and “I will provide an example for this attribute, based on my personal or academic experience.” The results of the analysis are presented next.

Results. Data analysis resulted in emergent themes, outliers, and expert opinions in regards to the follower attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010), as presented in Figure 3.

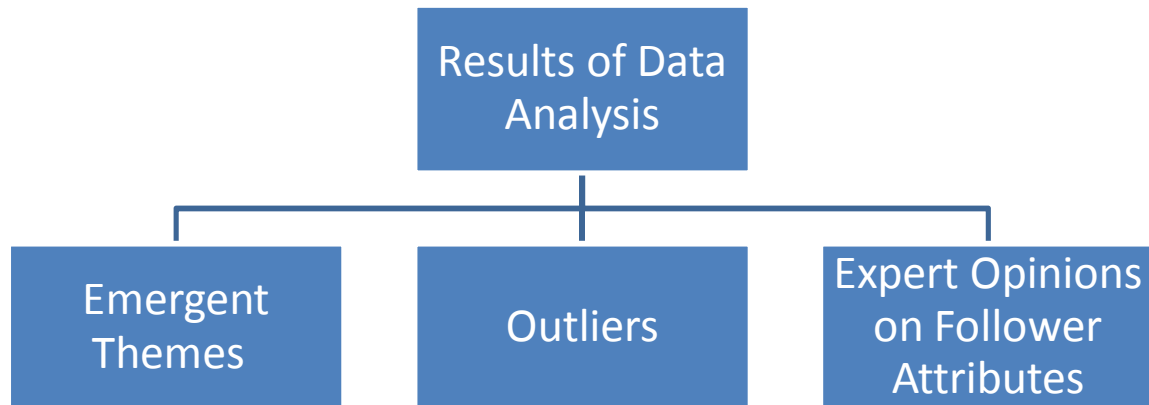


Figure 3. Components of data analysis.

Emergent Themes

Five emergent themes constitute the findings of this grounded theory study and are revealed in Figure 4. Each theme is presented as a statement, supported by rich, thick descriptions drawn from the data, including excerpts from the interviews with participants. The first theme emerged naturally in the process of the conversation. The second, third, and fourth themes emerged as a result of answers to the questions asked during the interview. The fifth theme appeared naturally, in the process of a conversation.

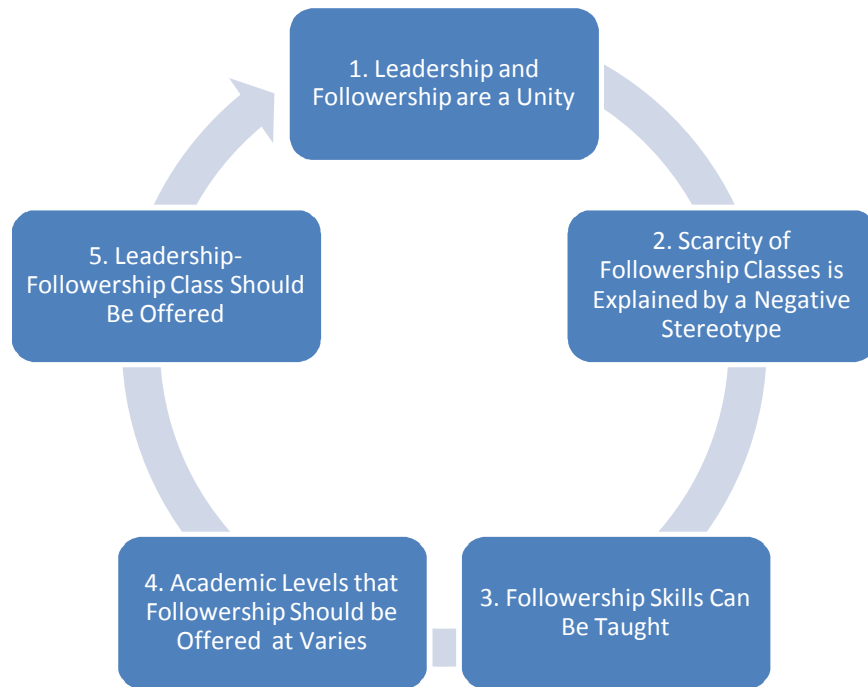


Figure 4. Emergent themes.

Emergent Theme 1: Leadership and followership are an inseparable unity.

Five out of seven respondents during the process of interview mentioned that leadership and followership should not be regarded as two independent units. At different times of the interview, some in the beginning, some in the middle, and some more than once, they pointed out the importance of viewing the two as integral elements of a single whole.

Rob Koonce posited: “I think so much in terms of not just leadership or followership, but in terms of leader–follower relations.” Gene Dixon explained: “I always talk about leaders and followers being two major components of leadership with the organizational mission or mission of the two that brings them together as the third component, and I do that in every class.” Barbara Kellerman contended: “They should not be separate, they go together. Leaders and followers go together. They cannot be distinguished from each other.”

Ron Riggio stated his views on the continuum of the leader-follower relations in the following way:

I think studying followers in isolation is limited because it really is an interaction between leaders and followers working together. It's the idea that the two of them produce leadership. Leaders cannot do leadership as just leaders. And followers cannot do leadership because once they start to do leadership, they are doing leadership. They are not doing followership. So the leaders' behavior and the followers' behavior interact to co-produce what is really leadership. We see some person standing up at a podium and we say that's the leader. But it's not leadership though unless these people, you know, cooperate and collaborate.

Joanne Ciulla confirmed that followership and leadership are inseparable: "I don't see those two as separate." She continued: "But most people who study leadership, I would assume, I certainly do, see it as a continuum between people. So it's always in flux: Sometimes one person's leading and the other one is following." She added: "I agree that leadership and followership go hand in glove." She further stated:

So, followers, actually are a constructed category to some extent because it's relational. And any leadership course is a followership course. And any follower, of course, as Kelley says, has the same qualities as the leader. So I don't really see them as different.

The second emergent theme resulted as a response to the first research question.

RQ 1: How can scarcity of followership courses in academic curricula be explained?

Emergent Theme 2: Scarcity of followership classes is explained by a negative stereotype prevalent in the United States. Five out of seven participants attributed the fact that followership classes are still not widely available as a part of academic curricula to the reason that society in general is still under the negative stereotype of the word follower. They shared examples related to the topic discussed stemming from their overall or teaching experience. Ira Chaleff claimed:

It's staggering that we still don't have attention to followership. In the United

States we are still in throes of the frontier mentality and the great men or great women now are leadership model. And even though we talk about moving away from that model, most academics talk about that, it just hasn't fully entered the educational system.

He further provided an example from *The Art of Followership: How Great Leaders Create Great Leaders and Organizations* (2008), the book that he co-edited with Ron Riggio and Jean Lipman-Blumen [pp. 89-93]:

There's a chapter by a young woman who is graduating high school and she was applying to college. Her name is Krista and she observed that when she applied to colleges they all asked for what examples of leadership she had displayed. No one ever asks about followership and she said: "That doesn't make sense... because, you know, I can't be a leader in every activity. And the quality of my participation and support certainly should count for things. It's a very powerful argument, but culturally we are still just absolutely enthralled with leadership.

Ron Riggio confirmed the prevalence of the negative stereotype and provided his example:

I think one of the real reasons, particularly in the Western United States, leaders is something that people aspire to and has positive connotations. And followers, I think, has negative connotations, and so, when people think of followers, they want to be leaders and they don't want to be followers 'cause followers are the sort of sheep metaphor that Robert Kelley talks about. So, the prototype of a follower in most peoples' mind is sort of a complacent, just going along, zombie-like, submissive follower.

I've even done it in my classes, I've asked students, when we get to followership (when we do a leadership class, we spend some time on followership, and we talk about how important followership is) and I ask the students: "Would you take a course on followership?" and the majority say: "No, that wouldn't sound interesting to me," but about a third of them will say: "Yes, now that we've seen followership, we like it." So, I think, a lot of it is the semantics around it and the prototypes that people have about followers. So I think that's what's holding it back.

When invited to reflect on the scarcity of followership courses, Barbara Kellerman replied:

I think that it's very unfortunate. I think a lot of what is wrong in government today is not about bad leadership, but bad followership: people don't want to follow, everybody wants to be a leader. And when everybody wants to lead and

nobody wants to follow, groups don't work, particularly in evidence to the political system.

Providing an example based on her own experience teaching a followership course, which Dr. Kellerman has been teaching for several years, she affirmed:

It's [the followership course] never as popular as leadership, because people think I'm teaching how to be a follower, which is not what I am teaching, but the courses are usually wonderful. And once I teach it, usually students really get the point.

Dr. Jean Lipman-Blumen, "really persuaded by John Gardner's concern about the negative connotations of the term *to follow*," extends her understanding of the reasons why followership classes are not widely integrated in the Western curricula:

Well, I think people are not interested in followers. They don't like to think of themselves as followers. If you look up the definition of "follower" in the dictionary, it says: "to follow in the footsteps of, to imitate, to walk behind." And most people, even children, are not interested in conforming to that kind of a definition. Most people are not interested in followership in and of itself. If I, for example, teach a course on "Why People Follow Bad Leaders?" all kinds of people show up. People are interested in that issue. But interest in followership in and of itself... I think, people respond to that as something that they don't want to be and they are not interested. They don't see it as a field of an interesting start.

Emergent theme number three resulted as a response to the second research question posed for the study. *RQ 2: Can follower skills be taught?*

Emergent Theme 3: Follower skills can be taught. When asked whether they thought followership skills can be taught, six out of seven participants had replied positively. Ira Chaleff stated: "So it is a skill that can be taught, though before the skill, the awareness has to be raised [the awareness of the true intrinsic reasons that might prevent one from exhibiting certain skills]." He further provided an example of teaching individuals to speak up courageously to authority, and explicated how he thought awareness had to be raised first before they were taught the skill:

I really find it takes a lot of work to raise the awareness of what's keeping them from speaking up. What's really keeping them, not what they think is keeping them. For example, I work with [certain kind of] employees and they think they are going to lose their job if they speak up. They are just afraid that somehow they are going to be viewed as not being a team player. So I have to spend a lot of time helping people examine their relationship to fear, to courage, where they get courage from, and social courage.

He concluded by saying: "So, it's a very important topic. If we are going to get truly healthy leader-follower dynamics, I think it is best teaching that awareness and then the skills."

Jean Lipman-Blumen stated that although follower skills could be taught to individuals, the degree to which learning would make an impact on them is dependent upon each individual as "people have different degrees of ability to learn different things." She explained: "Yes, I think you probably could make some dent in all of these [12 attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010)] to some degree to people who do not have some kind of intellectual or emotional impairment. The degree to which you can, I don't know." She stressed the fact that individual differences play an important part in their ability of learning new things and that it is important to consider all sorts of differences:

If that one person, for example, is a high-functioning Asperger, a person who suffers from Asperger disease, the likelihood that you are going to be able to teach that person to be much better at interpersonal relations is very low.

When discussing teachability of follower skills with Ron Riggio, he concluded that certain skills (e.g. motivation) are much harder to teach:

I think, by very nature, skills have to be taught. Skills are something you practice and develop on your own, so almost by my definition I would say yes, all of them can be taught, there's none that cannot be taught.

Joanne Ciulla confirmed that follower skills can be taught. “A broader question: can leadership be taught and followership be taught, can ethics be taught? You can teach it to people and you can break it down, but whether people actually learn it, and practice it, you know.” She provided an example based on her academic experience:

I worked at a school in Kansas City and they were doing a leadership program. One of the projects they did was an extra curriculum one. They did a seminar for students on how to work in lab groups because when you take chemistry, you are put in small groups and you do your experiments together and you have to write your reports.

So they went in and taught follower skills: what it means to be a good group member in a group where you are doing an experiment together. And there is a set of skills sort of related to these other ones [12 attributes proposed by Antelo et al., 2010] about everything from being dependable to bringing in outside knowledge to looking things up to moving people towards a common goal.

When asked whether follower skills can be taught, Dr. Barbara Kellerman replied:

I don't really know. I don't teach how to be a leader and I don't teach how to be a follower. I teach *about* leadership and *about* followership. I do not know, and if you have read *The End of Leadership*, you know that I am very skeptical about *how to*.

Emergent theme four resulted as a response to the third research question guiding the study. *RQ 3: At what academic levels should follower skills be taught?*

Emergent Theme 4: Academic levels that followership should be taught at vary from high school to graduate school. Opinions on the academic levels at which followership classes should be offered included the following responses: (a) at or prior to high school; (b) undergraduate and graduate programs; (c) graduate programs first, followed by undergraduate; (d) should be offered every time a leadership course is offered.

At or prior to high school. Rob Koonce stated that having a followership course would:

Be like a course in social psychology. You would first need to explain to people what really exist to get them to understand all that it entails. People are not necessarily trained to think in this way. I can't imagine why we wouldn't start at or prior to high school. Why not?

Undergraduate and graduate programs. Jean Lipman-Blumen responded: "I think it could be offered to undergraduates as well as to graduates." Joanne Ciulla provided another example from her teaching experience:

And the question when you offer a certain course is really an interesting one because in my field, in ethics, I think it should always be offered last in leadership. I used to teach at the Wharton School and there we taught business ethics last. And the reason why you would teach an ethics course last is you have to have ethics of *what*. You have to learn the *what* before you can do the ethics.

But I think a course on leadership and followership could be taught just about anywhere in the curriculum and may be even having it first would be good because part of what you are teaching in leadership is about taking initiative and you want your students to be active learners through the rest of the course. So if I were to design a curriculum if we had a followership course, I would put it up front.

She further asserted that a followership course would be "extremely appropriate in an undergraduate program. Especially with undergraduates! They may not think of themselves as leaders and, of course, a good followership course is showing them that they are even when they don't hold the position."

Graduate programs first and then undergraduate. Rob Riggio explained his point of view:

Usually courses are developed off of a research base, and so, there's more and more research on followership. As that evolves, and as that research matures, I think, you are going to first see graduate courses, but then, I think, you'll see it come down to the undergraduate level. And it will come down to the undergraduate level in this idea of courses that will say leaders and followers or leadership and followership. And that's where it will be at the end of graduate level.

At the graduate level, I think, they will be able to handle the whole course on followership. Graduate students will get excited by that, particularly, in leadership programs. They would say: "Oh, I've taken all the leadership courses, oh, wow, now this is nice to look at followership."

Every time a leadership course is offered. Barbara Kellerman also suggested: “I think it should be taught at every level that there are leadership courses and every situation when there is a leadership course, there should be a follower course to match it.”

Emergent Theme 5: A leadership–followership class should be offered. This theme was birthed as a result of the discussion. Five out of seven participants noted that they would like to see a course that would combine the elements of both, where equal attention is given to both paradigms. Currently, classes on leadership either omit the follower component in their syllabi, or devote a limited time ranging from one week to two weeks to the topic.

Rob Koonce alleged:

Why would we have a dearth of followership classes and an excess of leadership classes? It really makes no sense. I would say it’s not just leadership and followership courses, but ones that combine skills of each, and needs, and behaviors, etc. of each. Both are very important, not one over the other, but we definitely have an imbalance right now.

Ron Riggio concurred:

I think, what you’re going to see more and more in the future in academic curricula is whether they are going to have a course on leaders and followers. I think, the majority of time people are going to include leadership and followership.

He pointed out: “And it will come down to the undergraduate level in this idea of courses that will say leaders and followers or leadership and followership. And that’s where it will be at the end of graduate level.”

Gene Dixon shared his opinion based on his teaching experience:

I do that at junior and senior level, and again, it’s not a pure follower course, it’s a component in other courses that I teach. Courses I teach are related to project management and design, and it’s interesting that not many people recognize that both of those contexts have leadership and leader components and follower component as well.

Joanne Ciulla also averred that followership and leadership should be taught together: “May be what I would argue is that you need a course on leaders and followers.”

Barbara Kellerman asserted: “Of course, it should include lessons on good leadership and good followership in the same course.” She added:

I think, the world would be much better off if we taught good followership along with the leadership. We call it civics, or whatever, but it’s about how to get people together to get things done and they cannot get things done when there’s everybody in the group insists on leading.

Outliers of the Study

An outlier can be understood as an exception, an unusual fact, a fact that stands out from a crowd. An outlier should not be viewed as a challenge; on the opposite, it may strengthen the overall findings of the study and needs to be presented openly (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). An outlier “not only tests the generality of the findings but also protects you against self-selecting biases” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 269). Outliers provide additional explanations to the studied phenomenon. They add “richness to explanation” and prove that “there are always exceptions to points of view” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 84).

Outliers of the study are presented in Figure 5. Two out of seven participants, Gene Dixon and Jean Lipman-Blumen, expressed a strong rejection towards the terms *follower* and *followership*. They are, therefore, the outliers in the study and their views are presented in this section. Barbara Kellerman, is an outlier in her own way. As she explained: “I’m very skeptical of these kinds of lists [referring to the list of follower attributes proposed by Antelo et al., 2010].” Thus, her position deserves special attention

and is also illuminated in this section. In sum, the outliers in our study have immensely added to the understanding of different views towards the phenomenon of followership and allowed the researcher a valuable segment to be explored and added to the overall construction of the grounded theory.

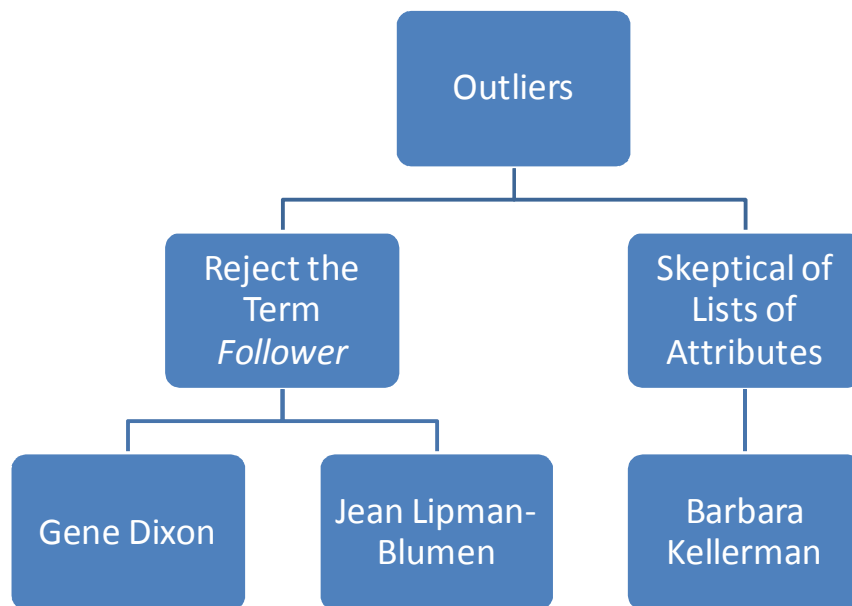


Figure 5. Outliers of the study.

Gene Dixon. Gene Dixon disclosed his attitude towards the concept of followership immediately after the interview began:

Well, number one, I don't like to use the word *followership*. I think I follow the thoughts of Joe Rost, who said there is no such thing as followership. There is leadership that has leaders and followers, but the word followership really has no basis in that context. So if we think of that, then I would never have a followership course. I have a follower component of leadership course.

I do that at junior and senior level, and again, it's not a pure follower course, it's a component in other courses that I teach. Courses I teach are related to project management and design, and it's interesting that not many people recognize that both of those contexts have leadership and leader components and follower component as well.

Jean Lipman-Blumen. Jean Lipman-Blumen revealed her view of the concept of leadership (not followership!) early in the interview and continued to come back to her

position throughout the conversation. Her viewpoint calls for a need to be presented by means of a rich, thick description:

Let me say this: I reject the term *follower* myself. I am really persuaded by John Gardner's concern about the negative connotations of the term follow. And he talks about constituents. If you look up the definition of the derivation of *constituents*, it means "*com*" from the Latin word "together," "*stitue*" means "to establish" or "create," or "found." So it means "to found something together, to co-establish." So that means that a follower isn't just taking the leader's vision and accepting it and following it.

The constituent is somebody who has shared in the creation of the vision, and therefore, has not only a right, but an obligation to maintain a relationship with the leader and keep the leader on track. So it isn't a matter of being a submissive follower who just takes whatever the leaders says and says: "Yes, Sir" or "Yes, Ma'am." That person contributes and helps to enlarge the goal or to perfect the goal or the implementation of the goal. The follower is somebody who is there to ensure that the leader stays tuned to the vision. So I think that some of the definitions of followership and the need for followers to be the same as leaders or to share certain understandings, it really depends.

I have a hard time wrapping my brain around followership. I'm in a different way of thinking. I don't want to teach people to be followers. I want to teach people to be co-creators. I want them to be constituents, to gravitate towards somebody who's willing to pull in the difficult work of leading.

And I think that a good constituent is somebody who could probably do what the leader does, may be not as maturely as the leader, but if they hang out with the leader long enough, and the leader is a good leader, they will probably learn to do it. So you want people who will engage with you not as your followers, but as your co-conspiratives [co-conspirators], your co-leaders. Why train a person to be a follower? Train him to be a leader. Say "You have a leadership role here and if you want to be *the* leader of the group, then either you can take this person's place when that person is doing it or go lead another group." Why not teach them to be leaders?

Why should we call them followers? We can just as easily call them prisoners. If you talk to people and make them understand, show them how they are leaders at their level within the organization, they are going to be much better leaders of that section and they will be people who will provide the support for the next level up and the next level up. And that's what you want. You want people who have the leadership capacity to implement action, to implement behavior or goals that the organization or the social system wants to see enacted. So you don't really want followers, you want all kinds of leaders, leaders at every level.

When you look at it from this [leader-follower] point of view, it's *exalting* the leader and it's *diminishing* the constituents who you are calling the follower. I think there has to be much more appreciation for talents of people who join the leader. Join that person and try to implement something that they all

accept as the worthwhile cause, and, the best of all, a noble cause. I think when we exalt leaders we attract the very worst kind because we attract people who are drawn by the power, by the status, by the privilege. I want reluctant people, I want to select people whom we all trust, whose judgment we trust, whose fairness we trust, whose integrity we trust.

When you conceptualize a group and say leaders and followers, you *diminish* the followers, you expect less from them and then they expect less from themselves. But I think that when we have to think of followers, get rid of the word, number one, and get rid of *subordinates*, those diminish an individual personally and individual's capacity to act in ways that the group needs those people to work.

I never use that word [subordinates], I reject it. They are your colleagues. They may be younger than you, they may be your junior colleagues, in terms of age, experience, or rank, but they are your colleagues, they are not your subordinates. So this I have to say is egalitarian point of view on leadership.

On December 7th, 2013, one month after the interview with Dr. Lipman-Blumen was conducted, a video titled *Jean Lipman-Blumen: Leadership and the Concepts of Followership and Constituency* was released where she reiterated the same key points discussed in the interview (Lipman-Blumen, 2013).

Barbara Kellerman. Barbara Kellerman is very skeptical about lists of all kinds, lists of both leaders' and followers' characteristics:

Of course, we would want leaders and followers to have all of these [referring to follower attributes proposed by Antelo et al., 2010]. They are not particularly followers' characteristics; they are human characteristics that we would want any member of any group to have.

The leadership literature is filled with lists like this. I put one together in a book a few years ago called *Reinventing Leadership* where I listed all the leadership literature and put together a list of all the kinds of characteristics (Kellerman, 1999, pp. 216-217). I mean the point is that people have these idealized images of how people should behave. Typically it's in a leader, or, you are looking at followers, but, of course, we would like leaders and followers to have all those wonderful characteristics that you described [referring to the 12 attributes proposed by Antelo et al., 2010].

But I have to say that of course one of the things that troubles me about the list that it is not peculiar to a relationship in which someone has relatively less power, authority and influence than someone else. The list is abstract and divorced from the fact that followers typically have fewer resources, less power, less authority and less influence than do leaders. This is simply to me a list of

what all people should be, whoever they are, leaders or followers. So, I agree with all of the characteristics, but, they are not to me peculiar to followers. They apply to everyone across the board. The list that you read me is perfectly nice for all the employees. That would be all good, but again, it's completely indistinguishable from a list that you would construct for an employer. And that's not ideal. The distinction between the superior and a subordinate is really what you are trying to get at. That list [Antelo et al., 2010] does not distinguish between them.

The whole point is to distinguish the follower from the leader. The list that you read me does not do that. It just talks about the people and what the people should have, all the leaders and all the followers. The point of a follower exercise, the point of understanding the follower is to understand that these are people who react to resources that leaders typically have.

The thing to look at is the distinction between leaders and followers, and to not view as a list of characteristics that equally applicable to both...The point of the exercise is to ask what do people do and how do they do it when they are not in doubt with a position of authority and they are not in doubt with power and they are not in doubt with influence. How do they behave, how should they behave, what enables them sometimes to get power—all of it is rather an interesting question.

Expert Opinions Received in Relation to the List of Follower Attributes

Study participants were asked to express their opinions on the 12 follower attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010). Their responses furcated into four categories:

(a) agreed that the attribute is important for individuals in the follower role to be developed and exhibited, and, therefore, to be taught; (b) agreed that the attribute is *highly* important for individuals in the follower role; (c) provided suggestions to re-word the definition or a term of an attribute for clarity and appeal to a larger audience; and (d) provided suggestions for additional attributes to be added to the list.

Bifurcation of study participants' responses to Antelo et al. (2010) follower attributes is presented in Figure 6 and is presented as the data shedding light to the research question number four for the study. *RQ 4: What skills need to be taught to individuals to enhance their follower skills in the leadership process?*

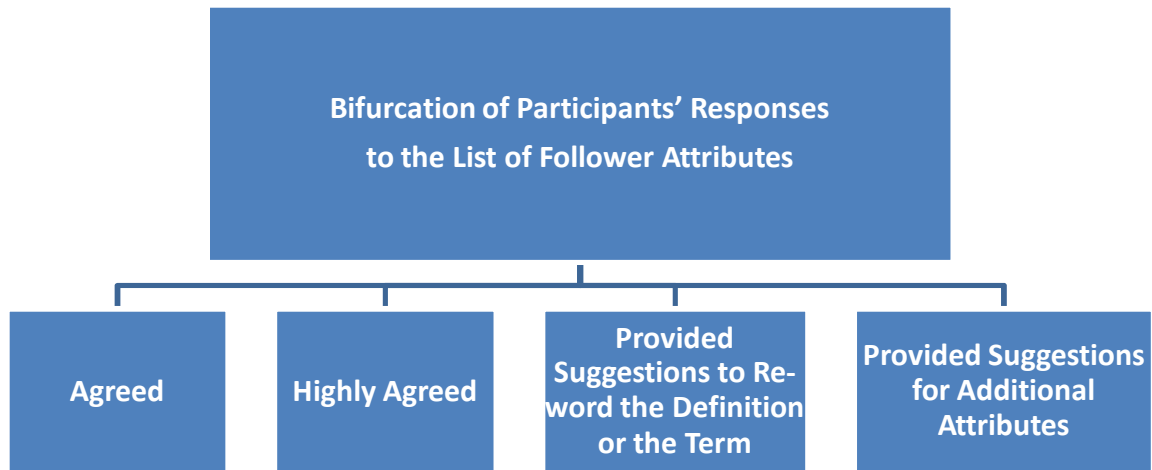


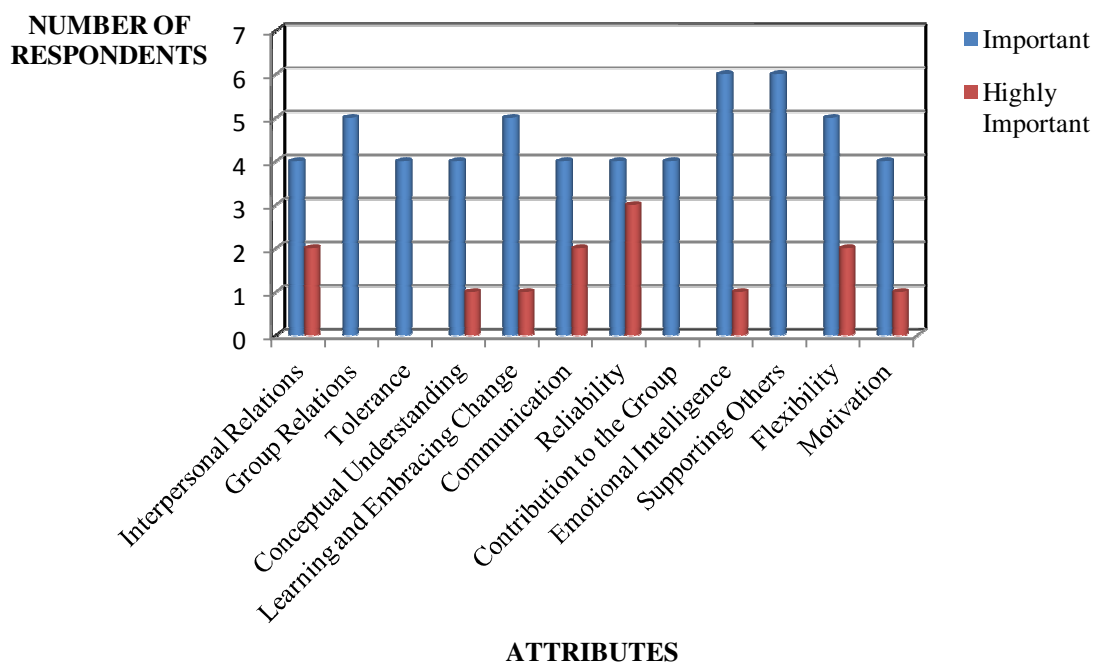
Figure 6. Bifurcation of participants' responses to the list of follower attributes.

Agree/Highly Agree. Boyatzis (1998) supports the fact that qualitative data may in some cases be represented numerically. Current study relied on numerical representation of the participants' responses to follower attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010) as the most appropriate means of data display. Thus, Table 2 presents the following information and ratings: 12 attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010), number of respondents who agreed that the attribute is important for individuals to develop, exhibit in the follower role, and, therefore, to be taught; and number of respondents who agreed that the attribute is highly important to develop, exhibit in the follower role, and, therefore, to be taught. The data in the table is also presented graphically in Figure 7.

Table 2

Participants' Ratings of the Importance of Follower Attributes

Attribute	Number of Participants Who Said the Attribute Is Important	Number of Participants Who Said the Attribute Is Highly Important
1. Interpersonal Relations	4	2
2. Group Relations	5	
3. Tolerance	4	
4. Conceptual Understanding	4	1
5. Learning and Embracing Change	5	1
6. Communication	4	2
7. Reliability	4	3
8. Contribution to the Group	4	
9. Emotional Intelligence	6	1
10. Supporting Others	6	
11. Flexibility	5	2
12. Motivation	4	1

*Figure 7. Participants' ratings of the importance of follower attributes.*

Suggestions for Attribute Rewording. Table 3 presents the attributes and the number of respondents who suggested that either the definition or the attribute itself should to be re-worded to radiate more clarity and appeal to a larger audience. It also presents suggestions of what it might be considered to be rewarded to. A narrative description of suggestions reflected in the table is provided in the form of excerpts from interviews with the participants.

Table 3

Attributes Suggested to be Re-worded by Participants

Attribute	Number of Participants Suggesting Re-Wording	Suggestions for Re-Wording
1. Interpersonal Relations	2	Ability to Listen
2. Group Relations	1	Moving people toward a common goal
3. Tolerance	5	Openness to Listen to Other People Openness and Listening to Other Views Prudence/Balanced Processing Openness/Wisdom
4. Conceptual Understanding	2	Information Skills
5. Learning and Embracing Change	1	Adaptability
6. Communication		
7. Reliability	2	Conscientiousness Suggested to re-word the definition
8. Contribution to the Group	2	Creativity
9. Emotional Intelligence	1	Found the term too broad and suggested to narrow it down to certain components of emotional intelligence
10. Supporting Others	2	Social Support Empathy
11. Flexibility		
12. Motivation	1	Motivation Drive

Figure 8 presents the attributes suggested to be re-worded to enhance their clarity and the number of participants suggesting changes.

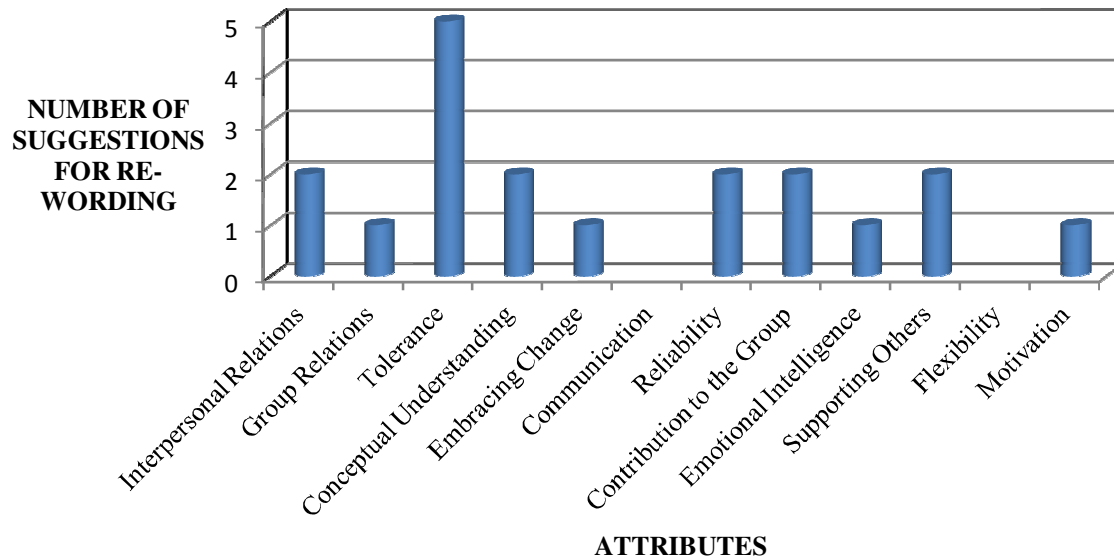


Figure 8. Attributes suggested to be re-worded.

Interpersonal relations. The complete definition of this attribute as proposed by Antelo et al. (2010) is as follows: “Facility for interpersonal relations concerning relationships between people” (p. 13). Jean Lipman-Blumen suggested: “Certainly, facility for interpersonal relations, you can teach that to a certain degree. You can try to teach people to listen more to other people.”

Group relations. Joanne Ciulla noted:

And there is a set of skills related to moving people toward a common goal. How do you, as a group member, not necessarily a leader, work to keep the group moving towards something?

Tolerance. Out of 12 attributes discussed, “tolerance” was the one most attacked. The definition of tolerance is as follows: “Tolerance concerning acceptance of the differing views of other people” (Antelo et al., 2010, p. 13). Several respondents

expressed their disagreement with the definition. Rob Koonce also pointed out the importance of listening skills when discussing tolerance: “You must have an openness to listen to other people. Research supports the idea that people are more interested in being heard, than having their ideas accepted. Thus, listening becomes very important to the communication process.”

Ron Riggio reflected on finding alternatives to the term *tolerance*:

Sometimes, in my sort of virtue work I talk about it [tolerance] as prudence, ability to see the other person’s point of view, or to see different points of view. So, I’m not sure that tolerance is the right term for seeing different viewpoints because it almost assumes that you are just tolerating them like “yes, ok, I’m shaking my head as I see what you’re saying, but I don’t agree with you at all.”

So, I think that’s Aristotle’s construct of prudence of evaluating both courses of actions, different opinions and then the leader deciding or the follower deciding how the two come together. In Bruce Avolio’s Authentic Leadership theory he talks about this [tolerance] as a balanced processing, being able to see other peoples’ perspectives, which, I think, is really prudence in the Aristotelian kind of deal.

Joanne Ciulla averred: “Well, tolerance is more of a moral quality. I would want to have tolerance tempered with something else because you shouldn’t tolerate everything. No, there are some views of other people that you shouldn’t tolerate. Racism shouldn’t be tolerated.” She added:

I would probably want to rename it. May be “concerning the acceptance of” because I don’t think you should accept other peoples’ views if they are horrendous. That’s not what tolerance is. So tolerance is really more about listening to other views or allowing other people to express their views. But to tolerate... there are some views that are intolerable.

May be what you might have to do is “concerning acceptance but not *agreement* of different views of other people.” Or listening to, but not necessarily agreeing with other people. Yes, because that would be unethical behavior. May be sort of just “being open to.” Because you can be open to another view, but it doesn’t mean you accept it. The problem word here is “acceptance.” I would do something about that word. May be “openness” because that is what that means. What you want to get at tolerance is that you don’t right off the bat exclude a particular person or point of view. But you don’t have to accept it.

Jean Lipman-Blumen shared her thoughts:

Tolerance is the word I have trouble with because I can't always say that we can tolerate different points of view. I reject that. I think we have to learn to accept. If I tolerate, I'm just putting up with you. No, I have to look at that in a much more accepting way and try to understand it, and try to sort of get into one's head and appreciate why one feels so strongly about that.

Tolerance means "I put up with you." Think about the word *tolerate*. "I tolerate, I allow it, I don't really want it." Built in the concept of tolerance is the sense of rejection. I really reject it, but I'll stand it. I grind my teeth and I'll put up with that. So I reject that. I think this depends so much on the capacities of the constituents, and we are all very different.

Conceptual understanding. Antelo et al. (2010) present this attribute as

"conceptual understanding concerning the ability to use knowledge, reasoning, intuition and perception" (p. 13). Ron Riggio professed:

I think that that [conceptual understanding] really is part of the whole prudence/wisdom domain. It's seeing other peoples' point of view and then being able to use that knowledge, what you perceive, what you learn from other people and use that to make wise decisions from either a leadership perspective or followership perspective.

Joanne Ciulla expressed her point of view regarding the formulation of the attribute:

So, because "conceptual understanding" means understanding concepts, that's different than knowledge. And what you are really saying is having at hand the facts you need to do the work that you have to do. Facts and skills or information skills. So I would slightly change that because what you mean is more than concepts. You say "ability to use knowledge" but you don't talk about "having knowledge."

Reliability. Antelo et al. (2010) definition of reliability is: "reliability as a group member concerning the ability with the creation of patterns and the capacity to solve organizational problems" (p. 13). Ron Riggio's reacted to it as follows:

When I think of reliability, I think about conscientiousness, which is one of the Big Five Personality constructs. Here we are talking about two things. Let me come back to "the capacity to solve organizational problems," but also "can I count on a follower," and that's really what I think you are trying to get at. Can I

count on this person? If I empower this person, can I count on them to get things done, to solve problems? When I look at some of the terms, I would use different terms.

Joanne Ciulla suggested:

That's really wordy. That's not what reliability means. This [the term] does not match that [the definition]. If you look *reliability* up, that's not even what it means. *Reliability* means you can depend on somebody to show up and do certain things. And this is about "the ability with creation of patterns." That doesn't make sense. I think that's wrong. It's simply the wrong word.

Contribution to the group. Antelo et al. (2010) define contribution to the group as: "facility for contribution to the group concerning the ability to use the imagination to develop new and original ideas or things" (p. 13). Ron Riggio commented: "I would call that creativity and willingness to use your creativity, facility to be creative, or your own creative ability that helps the group." Joanne Ciulla concurred: "I would have underlined in bold more of the *creativity*, use of imagination to contribute the original ideas."

Emotional Intelligence. Antelo et al. (2010) define emotional intelligence as "emotional intelligence concerning personal attributes that enable people to succeed in life, including self-awareness, empathy, self-confidence, and self-control" (p. 13). Ron Riggio provided a detailed commentary on this attribute:

Emotional intelligence, I think, is a very broad term. Emotional intelligence from the Salovey and Mayer' perspective is very focused. It talks about abilities, the abilities model, the BarOn or the Goleman kind of model, or the Boyatzis model. Well, Boyatzis is more on the ability side, but the BarOn model turns it into both personality and emotional abilities. And, so, I think, this version, where "self-awareness," I agree, that's part of emotional intelligence, awareness of your emotions. "Empathy," being able to read other peoples' emotions. "Self-confidence," I would rename it as sort of emotional self-efficacy, but definitely "self-control."

Although it fits the model of emotional intelligence, but again, I go back and I think: ok, how much overlap is there between emotional intelligence and communication because a lot of this is about communication in terms of understanding. Empathy is about understanding at the emotional level,

understanding emotion communication. But I think it's very important for followers.

Supporting others. The definition of supporting others proposed by Antelo et al. (2010) is: “facility for supporting others concerning a picture of likeness of someone or something produced either physically or formed in the mind of the beholder” (Antelo et al., 2010, p. 13). Joanne Ciulla suggested another term for this attribute:

So supporting others could include empathy, the ability to understand what people are feeling. But “supporting others” is helping, empathizing with them. May be that's empathy? That's it. It's empathy, so it includes empathy and giving, so that's what I would put for them.

Motivation. Antelo et al. (2010) define motivation as: “motivation for goal accomplishment on a variety of projects concerning the biological, emotional, cognitive, or social forces that activate and direct behavior” (p. 13). Ron Riggio noted: “And in motivation, motivation drive, whatever you want to call it, follower motivation is very important. I think, motivation and skill and direction equals good followership.”

Jean Lipman-Blumen thoroughly explicated her understanding of teaching motivation to individuals:

I think all you can do is *excite* motivation. I can't teach you to be motivated. I can, if I'm lucky, present an idea to you that catches your imagination, that sets your imagination on fire so that you want to be part of it. I'm very interested in peace. I can't teach people to love peace; I can only try to *excite* them. I can't motivate them to work for. I can only excite them with the possibilities that this concept promises. And you can't motivate enough a person. That comes from within.

You can create the context, you can try to create the circumstances that will foster that person's motivation, but I really do believe that motivation is from within. Something interests you and you really can't wait to do it. A book interests you and you can't wait to pick it up and read it. But if a book doesn't sound interesting, who's going to motivate you to read it? You may be forced to read it because it's on the syllabus, but you are not going to really want to read it. You are not motivated by reading a book. You may be motivated by the grade, and that is extrinsic motivation as opposed to what I see as intrinsic.

Additional Attributes Suggested. Participants suggested other attributes that they thought were critical for individuals to display in the followership role. Table 4 presents these attributes, followed by a narrative by participants who suggested them.

Table 4

Additional Attributes Suggested by Participants

Name of the Participant	Suggested Attribute
Ira Chaleff	Courage
	Good Judgment
	Candor
	Diplomacy
Joanne Ciulla	Ability to Find Knowledge

Ira Chaleff. Ira Chaleff carefully scanned the list of all the 12 attributes and announced:

What immediately strikes me is that the 12 attributes don't embrace the most central attribute that I use in my model [courage]. Courage is an attribute. I think courage can be a skill as well, it could be taught, but it's also an attribute. By the way, good judgment, I think, may also be missing from this list because if a follower implements a leader's request with poor judgment, they can make the leader look very bad.

Now, what's missing from my perspective from the attributes is courage and here's why. Aristotle has viewed courage as the primary virtue. And the reason he does that—he says without courage you can't activate the other virtues. And particularly, in followership that's true. Because of the hierarchy, because of the power to dispense rewards, and punishments, and favors that hierarchical leadership has towards those below them. It requires courage for the followers who are the closest to the leader to form a true partnership with the leader.

I guess, the other thing that's missing here that is kind of related to courage is candor. Candor, but so is diplomacy. It's not just raw candor, but it's candor with diplomacy and if a follower doesn't have the courage to speak candidly and diplomatically, but more with candor than diplomacy to the leader, and giving the leader feedback, and honest perspective, then leadership will sooner or later make terrible mistakes.

Joanne Ciulla. Joanne Ciulla noted that an important attribute for individuals in follower roles to have is the “ability to find knowledge” as “the ability to know how to get the information you need to do what you need to do.”

Summary of the Grounded Theory

This grounded theory included five emergent themes that represent the findings of this study. The five themes revealed by the findings of this study are: (a) leadership and followership are a unity; (b) scarcity of followership classes is explained by a negative stereotype; (c) followership skills can be taught; and (d) academic levels that followership should be offered varies from at or prior to high school to graduate school, and every time leadership is mentioned; and (e) leadership–followership class should be offered, as presented in Figure 9.

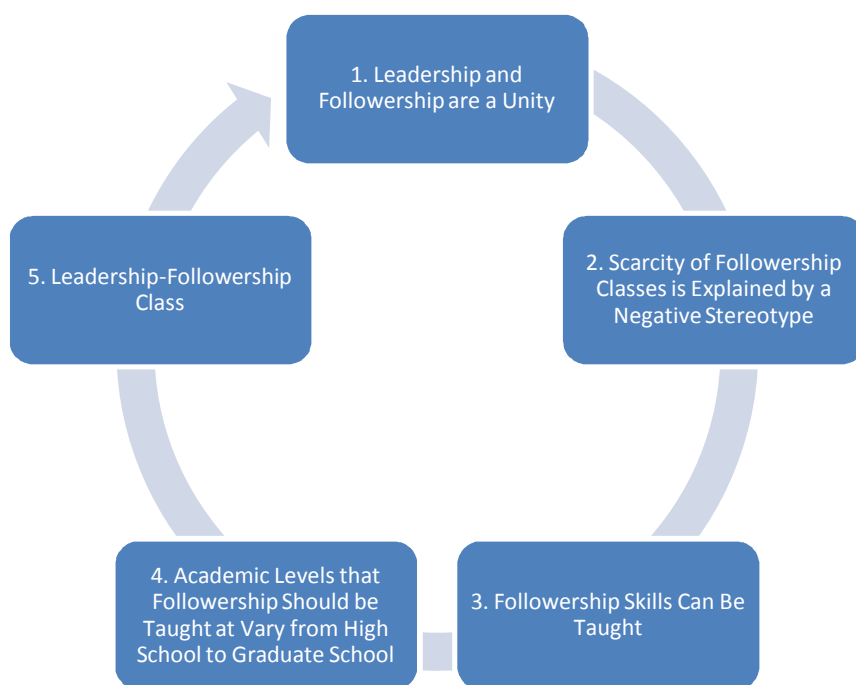


Figure 9. Five emergent themes.

Establishing Credibility/Trustworthiness of Qualitative Data

Trustworthiness is understood as quality of an investigation that makes the research significant to audiences (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Schwandt, 2001; Silverman, 2000). The readers need to know that the findings are well-grounded, sound, logical, correct, and justifiable (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006; Howell Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). This section illuminates three methods that were used to establishing credibility/trustworthiness in this qualitative study: peer debriefing, member checking, and triangulation.

Peer debriefing. Peer debriefing is a procedure of consulting with trusted and knowledgeable colleagues who are not directly involved in the process of research for their reaction and expertise. Peer debriefing allows for sharing ideas and opening new perspectives. Throughout the process of data collection and analysis, the researcher consulted with experienced colleagues.

Member checking. Member check, also known as member or respondent validation, is a process of soliciting feedback from informants on the researcher's findings. Schwandt (2001) suggests that in addition to serving its epistemological functions, member check may also be regarded as an ethical action of courteously sharing with the members the data that the inquirer intends to disclose about them. He finds that member check is "simply another way of generating data and insight" (p. 156). After the interviews were transcribed, the interview transcripts were sent to the participants electronically to establish accuracy of interpretation.

Triangulation. Triangulation may be understood as a method of confirming findings in order "to maximize the validity of a study" (Howell Major & Savin-Baden,

2010, p. 183; Yin, 2011). The process of triangulation involves using multiple sources. “The central point of the procedure is to examine a conclusion from more than one vantage point” (Schwandt, 2001, p. 257). The goal is to select triangulation sources that have different strengths, and thus, complement and fortify the overall findings (Berg & Lune, 2012; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Flick, 2004; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994). This study relied on triangulation by four different data types: (a) face-to-face interviews, (b) professional publications written by informants, (c) video recordings with the informants’ professional presentations, and (d) blogs, as reflected in Figure 10.

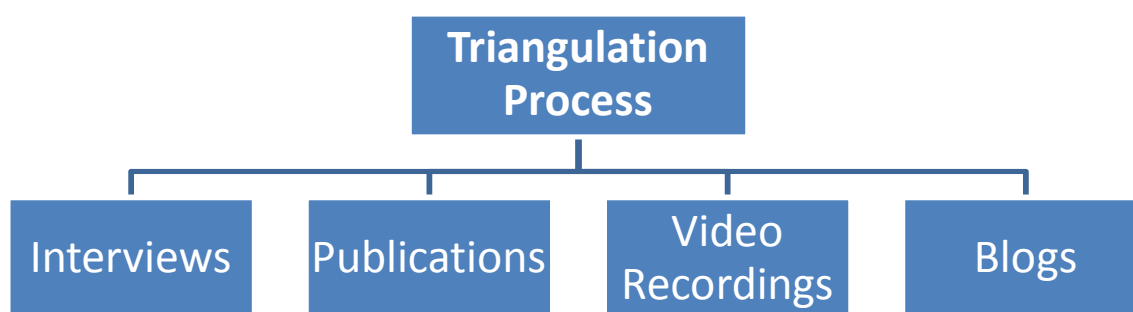


Figure 10. Triangulation process.

Data types. In addition to face-to-face interviews, the researcher heavily relied on professional publications (books and articles) of the interviewed experts in order to converge and fortify the findings. Professional video recordings of the experts’ presentations were another means to consolidate the findings. Flick (2004) affirms that the usage of video data is escalating in qualitative research and “visual data may be triangulated with verbal data as an independent source of information,” which truly extends “further possibilities of triangulation with traditional types of data” (p. 179).

Interviews studied in isolation would not result in a harmonious understanding of the participant’s standpoint and would not provide a fully colored picture. Therefore, a

holistic approach to understanding the respondents' viewpoints was undertaken. Miles and Huberman (1994) present triangulation as an analytic induction and explain:

“Triangulation is a way to get to the finding in the first place—by seeing or hearing multiple instances of it from different sources by using different methods” (p. 267).

For example, Ira Chaleff's emphasis on courage as the follower attribute during face-to-face interview was most comprehensively understood when examined in alliance with his book *The Courageous Follower: Standing Up To and For Our Leaders* (Chaleff, 2009), his articles (Chaleff, 2001; 2004; 2011), videos (Chaleff, 2012; 2012a) and blog communications (Chaleff, 2014). Thus, the process of data triangulation can be presented as an equation:

$$\text{Interview} + \text{Publications} + \text{Videos} + \text{Blog} = \text{Triangulation},$$

as illustrated in Figure 11.



Figure 11. Triangulation equation.

For triangulation purposes the following resources were also used when analyzing data of Ron Riggio's interview: his multiple textbooks and books, including *The Art of Followership: How Great Followers Create Great Leaders and Organizations* (Riggio et al., 2008), Ron Riggio's video recordings on the topics of leadership and followership and leadership development (Riggio, 2013a; 2013b) along with his blog (Riggio, 2013) and his most recent article (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

In addition to Joanne Ciulla's interview, her books *The Working Life: The Promise and Betrayal of Modern Work* (Ciulla, 2000), *Ethics, The Heart of Leadership* (Ciulla, 2004), and her video presentation *Leadership as Morality Magnified* (Ciulla, 2012) were examined for a comprehensive analysis.

In addition to Jean Lipman-Blumen's interview, her books *The Art of Followership: How Great Followers Create Great Leaders and Organizations* (Riggio et al., 2008), *The Allure of Toxic Leaders: Why We Follow Toxic Bosses and Corrupt Politicians—And How We Can Survive Them* (Lipman-Blumen, 2005), her articles (Lipman-Blumen, 2005a; 2005b; 2006) and her video recordings (Lipman-Blumen, 2013; 2013a; 2014) were examined.

To complete analysis of Barbara Kellerman's interview, the following sources were used: her multiple books including *Reinventing leadership: Making the Connection Between Politics and Business* (Kellerman, 1999), *The End of Leadership* (Kellerman, 2012), *Followership: How Followers Are Creating Change and Changing Leaders* (Kellerman, 2008), several publications on leadership and followership including (Kellerman, 2012a; 2012b), video recordings with her presentations on followership (Kellerman, 2009; 2013; 2014a) and her blog (Kellerman, 2014).

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the findings for a grounded theory study that examined the importance of attributes suggested to be taught to individuals to enhance their follower skills. The study sought to explore the seven leadership and followership experts' perceptions in order to answer the following research questions posed for the study:

RQ 1: How can scarcity of followership courses in academic curricula be explained?

RQ 2: Can follower skills be taught?

RQ 3: At what academic levels should follower skills be taught?

RQ 4: What skills need to be taught to individuals to enhance their follower skills in the leadership process?

The study also sought the experts' opinions on the list of follower attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010). Thus, the research questions asked and the answers obtained in the form of emergent themes are reflected in Figure 12.

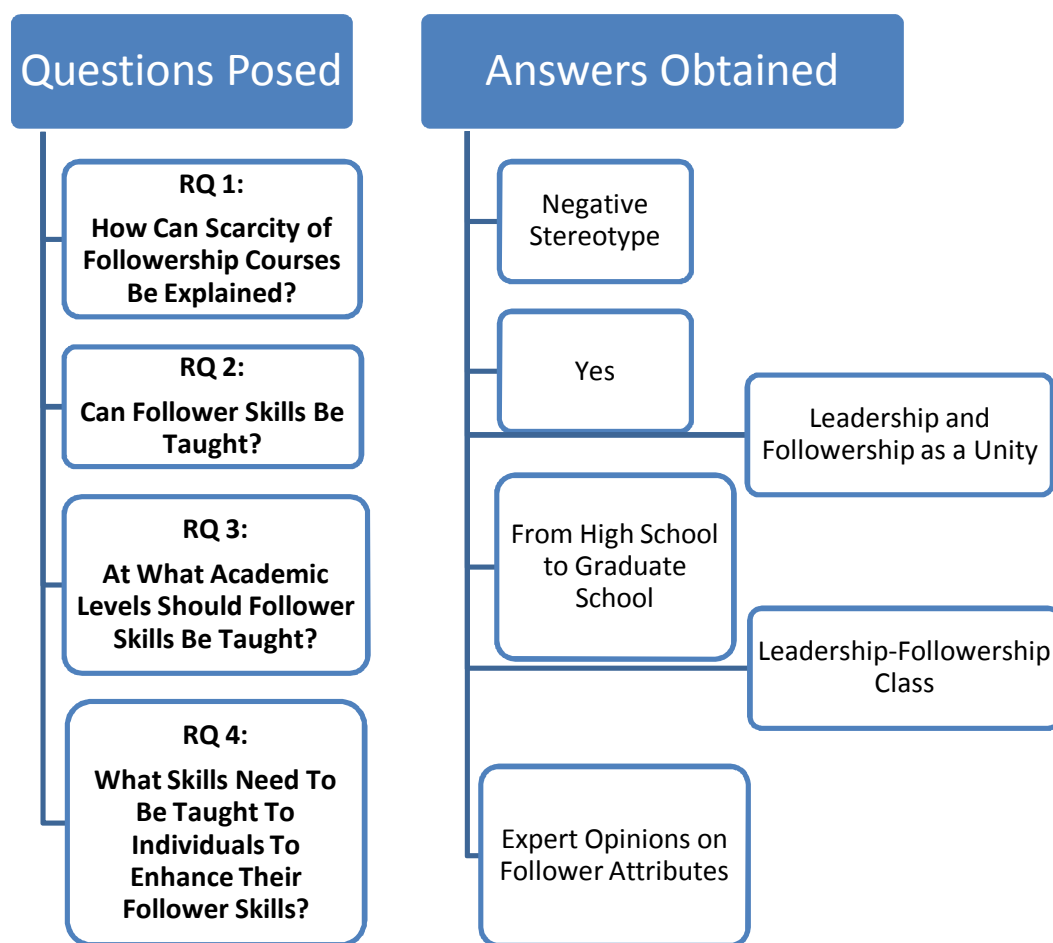


Figure 12. Questions posed and the answers obtained.

The chapter also presented the outliers of the study: the views of the participants that were drastically different from the rest of the experts. As presented in Figure 12, the answers to the questions posed were fully obtained, including two additional areas of data that also emerged in the process of data collection. These additional two areas that emerged are: (a) leadership and followership as a unity, and (b) suggestions for a course that would equally combine leadership and followership. Interpretation of the results will be provided in the following chapter. It will contain interpretation of the five emergent themes, outliers, and the informants' perceptions in regards to the follower attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010) in relation to the research questions posed by the study. Implications of the findings for policy and practice as well as recommendations for future research will be presented.

Chapter 5: Discussion

As shown in the previous chapter, five emergent themes were generated as a result of the study, representing reflections of the leadership and followership experts on scarcity of followership classes, the answers to the questions whether followership skills can be taught, what skills need to be taught, and at what academic level they should be offered at. In addition, the other emerged themes confirmed the view that leadership and followership are an inseparable unity, and that future courses should combine the elements of both.

This chapter presents an interpretation of research findings for the five emergent themes, outliers, and study participants' opinions. Grounded theory is described, and a Leader-Follower Unity model is proposed for the first time. Implications for practice, limitations of the study, and suggestions for future research are discussed.

Interpretation

Interpretation is viewed as “a researcher’s understanding of the events as related by participants” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 48).

Interpretation is a productive process that sets forth the multiple meanings of an event, object, experience, or text. Interpretation is transformation. It illuminates, throws light on experience. It brings out, and refines, as when butter is clarified, the meanings that can be sifted from a text, an object, or slice of experience. (Denzin, 1998, p. 322)

A researcher is a translator of the participants’ words, thinking, and actions. A researcher is situated between the informants and the audiences that he intends to reach (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). As a mailman who delivers mail from senders to receivers, a researcher’s challenging task is to convey meaning from participants to audiences. Denzin (1998) also avers that no matter how long a researcher works on interpretation,

analysis in qualitative research are never finalized and terminal, as researchers constantly think about their data and have open access to extend, edit, amend or re-interpret their original interpretations, considering the fact that new circumstances emerge and insights arise.

Interpretation of Emergent Theme 1

Leadership and followership are an inseparable unity. Experts unanimously concluded that leadership and followership should not be studied in isolation. Every time a discussion on leadership is initiated the only way it can be brought to equilibrium is when the followership component is given equal attention. This finding is strongly supported by literature (Baker et al., 2011; Chaleff, 2009, 2010; Cox III et al., 2010; Gardner, 1987; Heller & Van Til, 1982; Hollander, 1992, 2013; Hollander & Offermann, 1990; Lundin & Lancaster, 1990; Prilipko et al., 2011; Rost, 1991, 1995; Sy, 2010; Tee et al., 2013; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

Interpretation of Emergent Theme 2

Scarcity of followership classes is explained by a negative stereotype prevalent in the United States. Emergent theme 2 provides an answer to the first research question: *RQ 1: How can scarcity of followership courses in academic curricula be explained?* Participants confirm that the Western society is enthralled by the leadership phenomenon. Individuals welcome books, courses and trainings of any sort on leadership, but, on the opposite, resist and cushion themselves with caution and skepticism every time the word follower enters a conversation. This finding is a reflection of work by Uhl-Bien et al., 2014. Barbara Kellerman affirms in her interview and her

video presentation (Kellerman, 2013) that a followership course that she teaches at the Kennedy School of Business at Harvard is never as popular as leadership class.

Interpretation of Emergent Theme 3

Follower skills can be taught. Emergent theme 3 provides an answer to the second research question: *RQ 2: Can follower skills be taught?* The informants believe that followership skills can be taught, as has been supported by followership research (Dixon & Westbrook, 2003; Kelley, 1992; Kellerman, 2008; Lundin & Lancaster, 1990). Based on Gardner's (1987) belief that 90% of followership can be taught, why could not followership be taught as well? Robert Kelley's (1992) believes that follower skills are "learnable and doable" (p. 129). The participants affirm that by definition of a *skill*, it can be taught. Lundin and Lancaster (1990) affirm that "skills that empower followers such as interpersonal communication, problem solving, coping with change, and conflict management must be taught" (p. 22). Furthermore, Barbara Kellerman and Robert Kelley have been teaching classes on followership for years.

Interpretation of Emergent Theme 4

Academic levels that followership should be taught at varies from high school to graduate school. Emergent theme 4 provides an answer to the third research question: *RQ 3: At what academic levels should follower skills be taught at?* Experts agreed that follower skills can be taught at any level from at or prior to high school to graduate school. The bottom line is straightforwardly expressed in Barbara Kellerman's statement: "I think it should be taught at every level that there are leadership courses and every situation when there is a leadership course, there should be a follower course to match it."

Interpretation of Emergent Theme 5

A leadership–followership class should be offered. Study informants agreed that in the future they would like to see and they anticipate seeing a leadership–follower class or leaders and followers class. Malakyan (2014) strongly supports this view:

Leadership and followership as behavioral functions ought to be treated mutually and studied simultaneously. The theoretical foundation of followership should be studied along with the foundations of leadership in order to understand how the relationships between the two dependent variables work. (pp. 16-17)

Interpretation of Outliers of the Study

The outliers of the study were different from the rest of the participants in that that they rejected the term follower (Gene Dixon and Jean Lipman-Blumen) and were supporters of the views of Gardner (1987) and Rost (1991). Gardner (1987) stated that all the individuals down the line from the leader, who may just as easily be called *leaders at their level*, share leadership goals unofficially by acting responsibly in congruence with the common purpose (Gardner, 1990, emphasis added). He admitted that these lower level leaders, who are critically vital both to the group and to the leader have been bitterly ignored in the literature.

As Joseph Rost (1991) stated: “I have no trouble with the word *followers* [emphasis in original], but it does bother a number of other scholars and practitioners, who view the word as condescending” (p. 107). He, then, declared: “No amount of egalitarian idealism will change the fact that there will be followers as long as human beings inhabit this planet. Only the meaning of the word *followers* [emphasis in original] will change, not the existence of human beings who are followers” (Rost, 1991, p. 108).

It has been argued that since the meaning of the terms followers or subordinates are so condescending and offensive, they should be eradicated and all individuals to be

referred to as leaders. In that case the notion of leadership will no longer be elitist. To those who hold the described viewpoint, Rost (1991) extended the following statement: “If all the people with whom leaders interacted were other leaders, leadership as a meaningful construct would not make much sense” (Rost, 1991, p. 108).

One participant (Barbara Kellerman) was skeptical of all lists of characteristics both leaders and followers, and skeptical about the teaching “how to” approach, giving a preference for “teaching about.” These outliers have enriched the study in that they expanded our understanding of different standpoints that exist but may not be otherwise known.

Interpretation of the Expert Opinions Received in Relation to Follower Attributes

Expert opinions obtained provide an answer to the fourth research question: *RQ 4: What skills need to be taught to individuals to enhance their follower skills in the leadership process?* Expert opinions in regards to follower attributes discussed brought the researcher to modify a list of attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010) in three ways: (a) the attributes that were agreed on by the participants were preserved, (b) some attributes were re-worded based on the experts’ opinions, and (c) additional attributes suggested by the informants were added to the list.

Thus, five emergent themes, outliers, and participants’ responses to the list of attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010) evolved into the grounded theory, as presented in Figure 13.

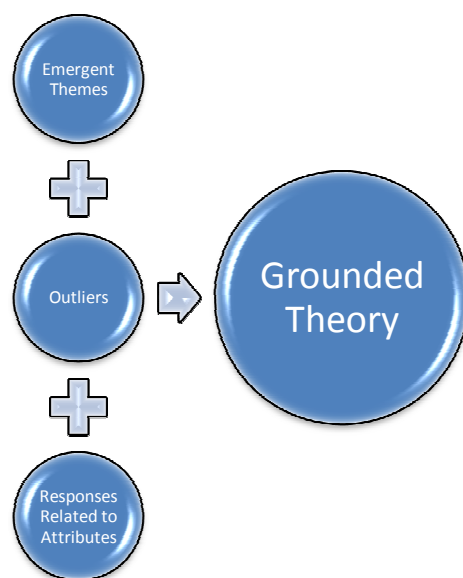


Figure 13. Emergence of the grounded theory.

Theoretical Underpinning of the Grounded Theory

Prior to introducing the grounded theory constructed in the study, theoretical explanation is extended to illuminate the key elements critical to a newly conceived theory. Theorizing is an interpretative process and assumes condensing raw data into clearly defined categories that will in turn become a theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). These categories, however, have to be interrelated and have a logical relationship between them in order for a final product of a study to be a cogent, coherent theory.

Charmaz (2002) extends the following assumptions towards constructivist grounded theory: (a) “multiple realities exist, (b) data reflects the researcher’s and the researcher’s participants’ mutual constructions, (c) the researcher, however incompletely, enters and is affected by participants’ worlds” (p. 678).

Thus, a constructivist approach builds a theory based on implicit meanings, which are collected and learned by the researcher, and provide an interpretive representation of the studied phenomenon, as opposed to an exact picture of the world, as it would be

constructed by means of an objectivist grounded theory. As Charmaz (2011) puts forth, “many grounded theorists claim to construct theory but neglect to explicate what they assume theory encompasses” (p. 363). Thus, many of their common mistakes boil down to data synthesis or construction of condensed themes. She explains that instead of constructing a theory they simply move toward a theory construction or provide lengthy descriptions (Charmaz, 2011), “an organized strategy rather than a theory” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 133).

The constructivist grounded theory was applied in this study, serving as a method of innovation. The constructivist theory discoveries are located in space, time and are situation-specific. Thus, the constructivist grounded theory enabled us to construct new understanding of how participants defined their perceptions of the scarcity of followership classes in the academic curricula, and, specifically, follower attributes that they found essential for individuals to exhibit when in the follower role.

When the researcher is convinced that his conceptual framework truly represents a systematic grounded theory, when he is convinced that his theory is “reasonably accurate statement of the matters studied, that it is couched in a form possible for others to use in studying a similar area,” he can be assured in his own “knowledgeability and sees no reason to change that belief” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, pp. 224-225). Once the researcher is assured that his core categories are saturated and that his theory “is now sufficiently formulated for his current work,” “he knows systematically about his own data” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 225). They explain:

Why does the researcher trust what he knows? If there is only one sociologist involved, he himself knows what he knows about what he has studied and lived through. They are his perceptions, his personal experiences, and his own hard-won analyses. A field worker knows that he knows, not only because he has been

in the field and because he has carefully discovered and generated hypotheses, but also because “in his bones” he feels the worth of his final analysis. He has been living with partial analyses for many months, testing them each step of the way, until he has built his theory. (p. 225)

Glaser and Strauss (1967) purport:

The practical application of grounded sociological theory, whether substantive or formal, requires developing a theory with (at least) four highly interrelated properties:

1. The first requisite property is that the theory must closely *fit* [emphasis in original] the substantive area in which it will be used.
2. Second, it must be readily *understandable* [emphasis in original] by laymen concerned with this area.
3. Third, it must be sufficiently *general* [emphasis in original] to be applicable to a multitude of diverse daily situations within the substantive area, not to just a specific type of situation.
4. Fourth, it must allow the user partial *control* [emphasis in original] over the structure and process of daily situations as they change through time. (p. 237)

As John Dewey had stated, “grounded theory is applicable *in* [emphasis in original] situations as well as *to* [emphasis in original] them. Thus people in situations for which a grounded theory has been generated can apply it in the natural course of daily events” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 249).

Description of the Grounded Theory

The purpose of this study was to identify the most important characteristics to be exhibited by individuals in the follower role and propose a method of teaching them to become skilled followers. The results of our study are extended as a set of propositions and are graphically presented in Figure 14:

1. A Leader-Follower course needs to be developed as any audience consists of leaders and followers and each individual shifts roles in the leadership process (Baker et

al., 2011; Chaleff, 2009, 2010; Cox III et al., 2010; Howell & Mendez, 2008; Kellerman, 2012; Kelley, 1988; 1992; Malakyan, 1998; 2014, Rost, 1991; 1995).

2. A Leader–Follower course is appropriate at any academic level when a typical leadership course would be offered: starting from high school and up to post-graduate level in the form of organizational training.

3. Various views need to be taken into account when addressing an audience of the course: negative stereotype associated with the term follower prevalent in Western culture, as well as opposition/rejection of the term. Thus, it is recommended to introduce the works of Gardner (1987) and his alternatives to the term such as *constituents*, *partners*, *co-creators*, *co-leaders*, and other terms, as well as the views of Rost (1991) in the course.

4. The 17 attributes suggested to be taught are the attributes preserved, re-worded, and added:

1. Interpersonal relations
2. Group relations / Moving people toward a common goal (instead of Group relations)
3. Openness to others' views / Listening skills / Prudence (instead of Tolerance)
4. Work-related knowledge (instead of Conceptual understanding)
5. Embracing change / Adaptability (instead of Learning and embracing change)
6. Communication
7. Reliability / Conscientiousness (instead of Reliability)
8. Creativity (instead of Contribution to the group)
9. Emotional intelligence
10. Social support / Empathy (instead of Supporting others)

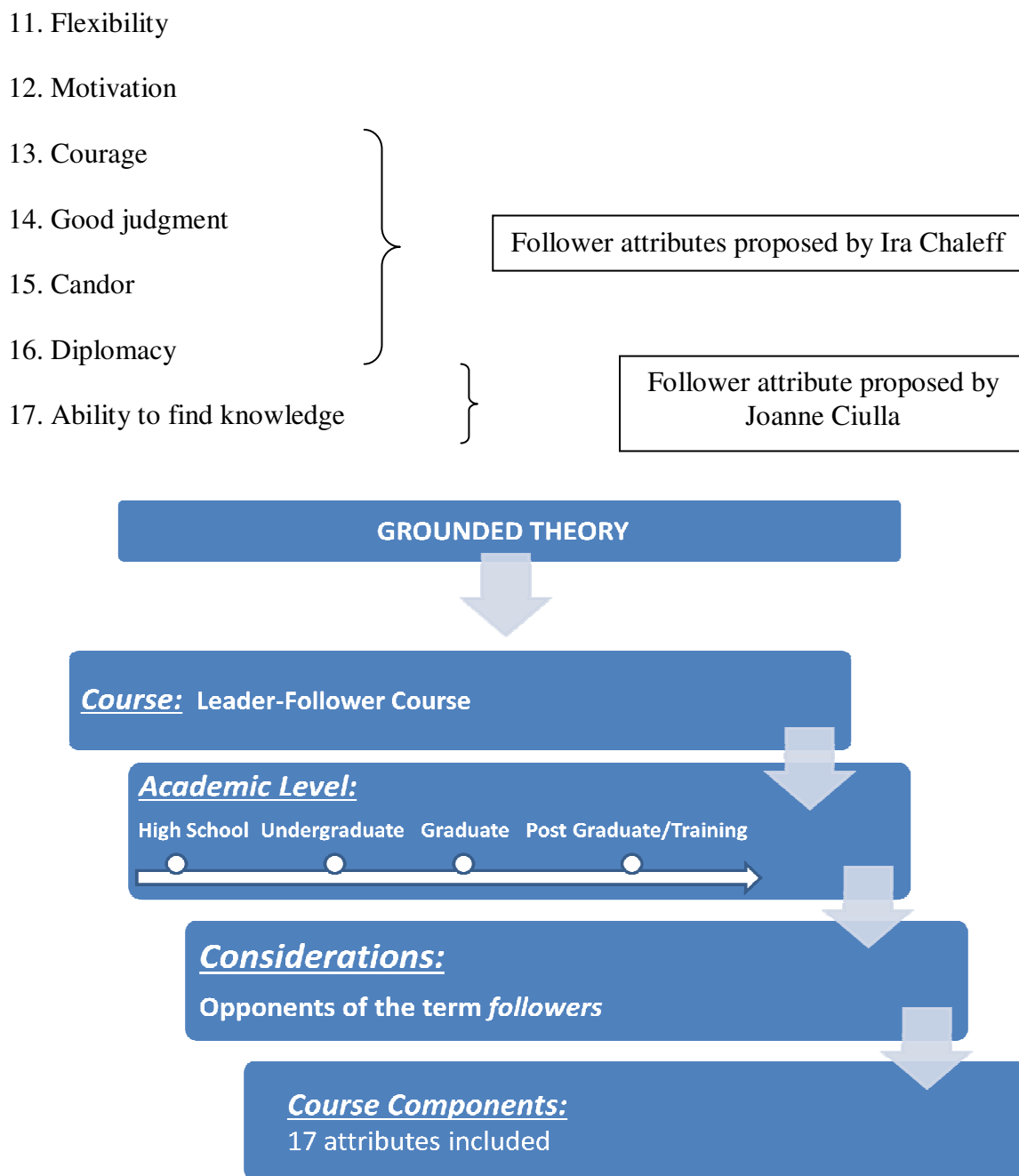


Figure 14. Design of a new Leader–Follower course based on the grounded theory.

Leader–Follower Unity Model

Extensive research supports that individuals play leader and follower roles interchangeably (Baker et al., 2011; Chaleff, 2009, 2010; Cox III et al., 2010; Howell & Mendez, 2008; Kellerman, 2012; Kelley, 1988; 1992; Malakyan, 1998; 2014, Rost, 1991;

1995). Each individual acts as a leader in one situation and a follower in another.

Therefore, following a premise that qualitative research brings innovation, a model of Leader–Follower Unity (LFU) is proposed to portray an individual’s ability to act as a follower or a leader, depending on the context. A model is “an overall framework for how we look at reality”; a model can also be referred to as a paradigm (Silverman, 2000, p. 77).

Leader–Follower Unity in teaching. As was previously established in Table 1, Prilipko’s Taxonomy of Leadership Theories with the Follower Component, leadership theories focus on the role and characteristics of the leader, leaving insignificant room for the role of followers (Malakyan, 2014). Thus, textbooks and courses with a heavy emphasis on leadership breed a perception of inequality in the roles, with leaders being exalted and followers diminished, as portrayed in Figure 15.

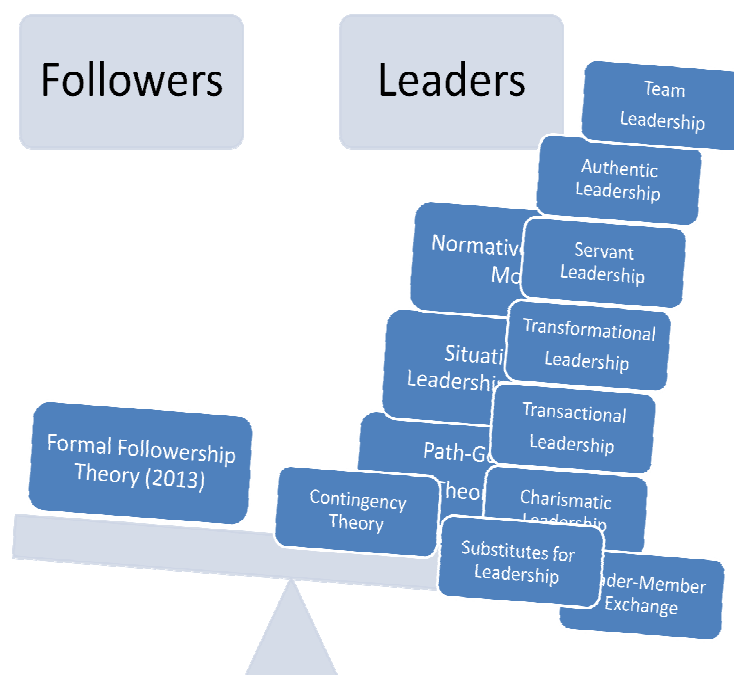


Figure 15. Heavy emphasis on leadership in teaching.

Teaching from an LFU standpoint enables practitioners to embrace the criticality of both sides and address the differences, needs and attributes of both. When applied to teaching leadership–followership courses, LFU recognizes that both components are equally weighted. The attributes, however, may not be identical for leaders and followers (the quest that has been approached and still remains an avenue for further exploration), but are overlapping. This is shown in Figure 16. While some of them are commonly desired characteristics (attributes characteristic to both leaders and followers) (Baker et al., 2011; Hemphill & Coons, 1950; Hollander, 1992; Kelley, 1988; Kellerman, 2008; Lundin & Lancaster, 1990; Nolan & Harty, 1984; Stogdill & Coons, 1957), the other attributes are particular to leaders or followers to a different extent (Antelo et al., 2010; Baker et al., 2011; Henderson, 2008; Henderson & Antelo, 2007; Hollander, 1992; Prilipko et al., 2011; Sy, 2010).

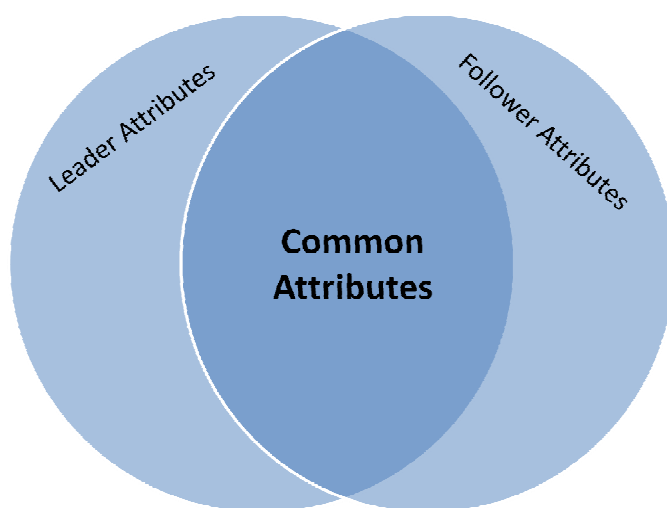


Figure 16. Leader and follower attributes—not identical, but overlapping.

The 17 follower attributes need to be integrated into the course material and should be undergirded in classical elements of theory so that when a theoretical concept is reviewed, it is approached from the dual standpoint: that of a leader and a follower. For example, when the concept of Emotional Intelligence is reviewed in the course (as one of the 17 attributes on the list), it needs to be addressed from the point of view of leaders and followers.

As Kelley (1992) alleged: “Why do we refuse to appreciate that followers are us?” (p. 8). If every audience consists of leaders and followers, and, mostly followers, why do we not approach the theories covered in classes from both points of view? “People learn best when they’re enjoying themselves” (Kelley, 2010a). Can we enjoy ourselves when we are studying about them, leaders? Would we rather enjoy ourselves in the classroom if we apply the concepts and theories to both leaders and followers, to the situations from the followers’ perspective? This is the essence of the LFU model in classroom settings.

Barbara Kellerman (2012) has a model where she positions leaders, followers and context as an equilateral triangle, “with leaders, followers, and context each along one, similar side,” and each of the three is “equally weighted” (p. xxi). While Kellerman’s triangle takes into consideration the positional power between leaders and followers, LFU is liquid and flexible in that it allows a leader to exhibit certain attributes when in a leader position and somewhat different attributes when in a follower role, contextualized depending on a specific situation.

LFU in teaching takes into consideration Barbara Kellerman’s suggestions that:

- (a) it is very important to differentiate between the leader and follower characteristics; (b)

it is important to “teach about,” rather than “how to.” Kellerman suggests that the main difference between leaders and followers stems from the power distance. She stated in the interview: “Followers typically have fewer resources, less power, less authority and less influence than do leaders.”

She clarified her standpoint:

The point of a follower exercise, the point of understanding the follower is to understand that these are people who react to resources that leaders typically have. The thing to look at is the distinction between leaders and followers, and to not view as a list of characteristics that equally applicable to both.

Therefore, when applying LFU to practice, it is important to distinguish between the attributes (a) important for leaders, (b) important for followers, and (c) that are equally important for leaders and followers. Also, it should be kept in mind that the depth and criticality of an attribute of a leader or a follower would depend on the context.

Implications for Practice

Praxis is defined as “practical application of a theory” (Merriam-Webster, 2013). When describing change that occurs as a result of reflective theory and action, Freire (1970) maintained: “This can be done only by means of the praxis: reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” (p. 51). The findings of this study have implications for academia, researchers, private and government organizations.

Universities. Currently the majority of courses offered are courses on leadership that incorporate a small segment of followership. The two officially known followership classes are those taught by Barbara Kellerman at Harvard (Kellerman, 2013a) and Robert Kelley at Carnegie-Mellon (Kellerman, 2012; Kelley, 2010). Universities wishing to incorporate a new course Leaders and Followers or Leadership and Followership to their curricula may do it by adjusting their current program by adding a follower component to

it, or in lieu of a typical leadership course. In either option, every theoretical model being studied needs to be examined in relation to leaders and followers.

Organizations. As Ciulla (2004) explained, the ethics of an organization is revealed through the ways that their followers are treated. Ethical organizations who find it important to take proper care of their staff, as the most critical asset of any organization, would regard the findings of this study instrumental for instilling the most appropriate management policies. “People are the foundation on which all organizations are built” (Adair, 2008, p. 143). By developing a greater understanding of the organizational staff’ shifting leader–follower roles, these organizations, including military, law-enforcement and federal government, would benefit from a systemic approach to characteristics of leaders and followers that are in a constant dynamic flow, with some attributes being more important exhibited by leaders, some by followers, and some equally essential to both.

Organizational consultants. In Barbara Kellerman’s terms, “leadership industry” has expanded to a plethora of training sessions and workshops with programs designed to improve performance and sharpen skills to become a better leader. A holistic approach that embraces the equilibrium of leaders and followers is critical for organizations, where up to 80% of organizational success belongs to the efforts of followers (Kelley, 1992). “One-way traffic” leader training to enhance their leadership skills without acknowledging that individuals act as leaders in some situations and followers in others is hopelessly obsolete. Organizational leadership and development consultants wishing to implement the LFU model for training purposes would need to adapt the dyadic approach where the criticality and attributes of both leaders and followers are recognized.

Society. Implications of this study may challenge the existing views of any given individual. It is important for one to understand the expectations to followers in Western society, the negative stereotype and connotations accompanying the term follower. Armed with this knowledge, individuals become more prepared to distinguish between attributes of leaders and followers and their difference or lack of thereof, as well as ethical and unethical behaviors in organizations, including the most desirable leader and follower characteristics, or, in the opposite case, toxic leadership (Lipman-Blumen, 2005; 2005a; 2005b; 2006) or toxic followership.

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of the study expose several avenues for future investigation:

1. Although followership has been addressed by scholars in other countries, it remains center-staged in the United States (Andriyanchenko, 2012). American studies on followership are making attempts to cross the borders and are being translated into other languages (e.g. Ira Chaleff's book *The Courageous Follower: Standing Up To and For Our Leaders* has been translated into Italian, Vietnamese, and other languages). One recommendation for future research would be to globalize the phenomenon and erase geographical boundaries for the concept to permeate the world.
2. Research is much needed to address the countries where the phenomenon of followership is little or not heard of, the cultural reasons, and other causes of it.
3. Research is needed on Leader–Follower class design pertaining to the academic level the class is taught at, as the class design needs to be tailored to the audience.

4. Research is needed to further examine the level and identification of leader–follower overlapping attributes in accordance with the LFU model (a) characteristic of leaders, (b) characteristic of followers, (c) equally characteristic of both.
5. This research took place in the United States and elucidated the fact that culture heavily influences the emergence of stereotypes and attribution of meanings. Therefore, research addressing (a) the causes of the negative stereotype to the words follower and followership would help understand the negative connotations surrounding the words, (b) the causes of the negative stereotype to the term follower among different generations, (c) the role of culture in relation to negative stereotypes of the term, and (d) the reasons why the negative stereotypes of the term remain to this day.
6. Research is needed to address the most effective methods for teaching follower skills (17 attributes resulting from the grounded theory).
7. Current study could be replicated in (a) different country/countries tailored to their cultural peculiarities and their understanding of the phenomenon of followership, and (b) cross-cultural research could be conducted.
8. Quantitative research is needed to (a) assess a new set of 17 attributes, and (b) validate a new instrument based on these attributes.
9. Research could be advanced by taking this study to the next level and approaching a new sample of leadership and followership experts on their views of Leader–Follower course and their suggestions.

10. An experiment study could be conducted to measure the understanding of the importance of followership between the students who took a typical class and those who took a Leader–Follower class.

Concluding Comments

This study identified the most important characteristics to be exhibited by individuals in the follower role as perceived by seven followership and leadership experts in the United States. The theoretical framework used for this study was 12 follower attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010).

The grounded theory constructed as a result of the study revealed the following: (a) scarcity of followership courses in academic curricula can be explained by the negative stereotype of the term follower prevalent in the Western society, (b) follower skills can be taught, (c) followership should be taught every time leadership is taught at academic levels ranging from high school to post graduate, and (d) 17 follower attributes were suggested for the purpose of teaching individuals.

The taxonomy of leadership theories with the follower component was developed to acknowledge the presence of followers in the leadership process. Additionally, the model of Leader–Follower Unity (LFU) was proposed to portray an individual's ability to act as a follower or a leader, depending on the context. Teaching from an LFU standpoint enables practitioners to embrace the criticality of both sides and address the differences, needs, and attributes of both. When applied to teaching leadership–followership courses, LFU recognizes that both components are equally weighted. The attributes, however, may not be identical for leaders and followers, but are overlapping. Thus, the identified

follower attributes should be integrated into the Leader–Follower course, linked with leadership theories, and approached from both the leader and follower standpoint.

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Appendix A

A Letter of Invitation to Participate in the Study

Dear Dr. _____,

My name is Evgenia Prilipko. I am a doctoral candidate in the Dreeben School of Education at the University of the Incarnate Word. I am conducting a qualitative study as part of the requirements of my degree in Organizational Leadership, and would like to invite you to participate in an interview.

The purpose of my study is to explore opinions of followership experts on follower attributes and identify attributes that can be effectively taught to educate followers. The theoretical framework used for this study is twelve follower attributes proposed by Antelo, Henderson, and St. Clair (2010). What makes this research unique is that no prior studies have been conducted based on expert opinions of the leadership and followership gurus.

Dr. _____, you are critically important to my research due to the following contributions to the field _____. If you decide to participate in this qualitative study, you will be kindly asked to meet with me (personally or via tele/video conference) for an interview about educating individuals on followership.

I will be happy to answer any questions you may have about the study. Please contact me at prilipko@student.uiwtx.edu or my dissertation chair, Dr. Jessica Kimmel at kimmel@uiwtx.edu.

If you think you might be able to spare a 45 – 60 minute time slot for the interview during the upcoming annual ILA global conference at Montreal October 30th through November 2nd, I will greatly appreciate it.

Thank you in advance!

With kind regards,

Evgenia Prilipko
Doctoral Candidate
Dreeben School of Education
University of the Incarnate Word
4301 Broadway, San Antonio, TX 78209

Appendix B

Informed Consent

Dear Dr. _____,

My name is Evgenia Prilipko. I am a doctoral candidate in the Dreeben School of Education at the University of the Incarnate Word. I am conducting a qualitative study as part of the requirements of my degree in Organizational Leadership, and would like to invite you to participate in an interview.

The **purpose of my study** is to explore opinions of followership experts on follower attributes and identify attributes that can be effectively taught to educate followers. The theoretical framework used for this study is twelve follower attributes proposed by Antelo, Henderson, and St. Clair (2010). What makes this study unique is that no prior studies have been conducted based on expert opinions of the followership gurus. If you have any questions about the study, please contact me at prilipko@student.uiwtx.edu or my dissertation chair, Dr. Jessica Kimmel at kimmel@uiwtx.edu.

You will be provided with a script of questions on the concept of followership that we will discuss. The meeting will take place at a mutually agreed upon time and place, and should last between 45 minutes to an hour. The interview will be audio taped so that I can accurately reflect on what is discussed. I will then transcribe and analyze the tape. Shortly after the interview I will email you a copy of the recorded transcript for your review to ensure accuracy of interpretation.

Your decision to take part in the study is voluntary and you may choose to withdraw from this project at any time during the interview or skip any question you prefer not to answer.

You may choose to disclose your identity and expert opinions for the benefit of academic and publishing purposes, and I do not foresee any risk to you from participation in the study. If you wish to remain anonymous, the information that you provide during the interview will be used to analyze general results, and the answers you provide during the interview will remain confidential.

Please indicate whether you choose your identity to be revealed in my dissertation for academic and publishing purposes:

Yes___ No ___

Participant's Signature: Dr. _____

Date of consent _____

Researcher's Signature: Evgenia Prilipko _____

Appendix C

Interview Protocol

Thank you for finding the time to participate in this study! The **purpose** of this study is to explore opinions of prominent followership experts within the United States on follower attributes/characteristics that can/cannot be taught.

- Please let me know if I have your permission to start audio-recording our interview at this moment.
 - Please let me know if you have any questions or if I can clarify any information before we proceed to our first question.
- 1) While the first course on followership called *Followership and Leadership* was offered at Carnegie-Mellon University by Robert Kelley in 1985 (Kelley, 1992, p. 36), availability of such courses at other universities in the United States to this day remains limited. Please reflect on scarcity of followership classes at present time and express how you feel regarding this situation.
 - 2) How would you explain the fact that a followership course is still not commonly offered as a part of academic curricula?
 - 3) At what academic level are followership courses being offered at present time (undergraduate, graduate, other)? At what level, in your opinion, should a course on followership be initially offered?
 - 4) Different attributes, categories, and typologies of followers have been proposed (Chaleff, 2009; Kellerman, 2008; Kelley, 1992). One of the opinions found in the literature is that “leadership and followership go hand in glove” and their attributes should be corresponding (Nolan and Harty, 1984, p. 311).

For this study we are reviewing the 12 follower attributes proposed by Antelo et al. (2010). Please express your opinion regarding the importance of each attribute:

1. Facility for **interpersonal relations** concerning relationships between people.
2. Facility for **group relations** and functions concerning the infrastructure or means to form a cohesive group or unit.
3. **Tolerance** concerning acceptance of the differing views of other people.
4. **Conceptual understanding** concerning the ability to use knowledge, reasoning, intuition and perception.
5. Facility for **learning and embracing change** concerning the process of solving a question or puzzle, difficulty, or situation.

6. Facility for effective **communication** concerning accurate exchange of information between or among people.
 7. **Reliability** as a group member concerning the ability with the creation of patterns and the capacity to solve organizational problems.
 8. Facility for **contribution to the group** concerning the ability to use the imagination to develop new and original ideas or things.
 9. **Emotional intelligence** concerning personal attributes that enable people to succeed in life, including self-awareness, empathy, self-confidence, and self-control.
 10. Facility for **supporting others** concerning a picture of likeness of someone or something produced either physically or formed in the mind of the beholder.
 11. **Flexibility** concerning the ability to change or be changed according to needs or circumstances.
 12. **Motivation** for goal accomplishment on a variety of projects concerning the biological, emotional, cognitive, or social forces that activate and direct behavior.
- 5) Can followership skills be taught?
 - 6) What skills do followers need to be taught?
 - 7) What methods of teaching would be the most effective?
 - 8) What skills cannot be taught?
 - 9) Do followers need to be taught the same skills or different skills with regard to their age, gender, work experience, level of education and other variables?
 - 10) If followers' cultural background impacts the formation of their follower attributes, do they need to be taught different skills according to their origin and culture? (For example: Should followers in China and the United States be taught different sets of follower skills? If yes, how would those skills to be taught be determined?)
 - 11) Would methods of teaching follower attributes make a difference depending on the institution that they are taught at (graduate school, workshops at organizations, military schools, etc.)?
 - 12) Do you have any other thoughts, comments or suggestions that you would like to share?

Thank you so much for your time, for your thoughts and input, and participation in this study!

- May I now stop recording our interview?

Appendix D

Sample Open Coding Procedures

- 1) While the first course on followership called Followership and Leadership was offered at Carnegie-Mellon University by Robert Kelley back in 1985 (Kelley, 1992, p. 36), availability of such courses at other universities in the United States to this day remains limited. Please reflect on scarcity of followership classes at present time and express how you feel regarding this situation.

RR: I think the thing is that there are some courses now on followership and you heard people at that meeting even talking about it. I think one of the real reasons, leaders is something that people aspire to and has positive connotations. And followers, I think, has negative connotations, and so, when people think of followers, they want to be leaders and they don't want to be followers 'cause followers are the sort of sheep metaphor that Robert Kelley talks about. So, I think, the prototype of a follower in most peoples' mind is sort of complacent, just going along zombie-like, submissive follower. I've even done it in my classes, I've asked students, when we get to followership, we do a leadership class we spend some time on followership, we talk about how important followership is and I ask the students: "Would you take a course on followership?" and the majority say "no, that wouldn't sound interesting to me," but about a third of them will say "yes, now that we've seen followership, we like it." So, I think, a lot of it is the semantics around it and the prototypes that people have about followers. So I think that's what's holding it back.

*positive
connotations
of leadership*

*negative
connotations
of followership,
"sheep"
metaphor*

*real-life
example*

*not interested
in taking a
followership
class*

*negative
prototypes*

- 2) How would you explain the fact that a followership course is still not commonly offered as a part of an academic curricula?

RR: So, I think, it's the same thing—why is a followership course still not commonly offered. I think, what you're going to see more and more in the future in academic curricula is whether they are going to have a course on leaders and followers. I think, there's always going to be, well, not always, but the majority of time people are going to include leadership and followership. It is interesting, for example, the Northouse book, does not have a standalone chapter on followership. Which I am sort of surprised, because in my syllabus I use that text. I have a whole week just devoted to followership. So, I think in a matter of time there will start to be more and more followership courses, but I think there's always going to be many more leadership courses.

*leaders-
followers
course*

*no followership
in the textbook*

*increase in
followership
courses*

*popularity of
leadership
courses*

Appendix E

Sample Matrix Analysis

Learning & embracing change	Yes	Critical	Yes	No clear answer	Yes	Yes	Yes
Communication	Yes	Critical	Yes	Extremely important!	Yes	Blank	Yes
Reliability	Yes	Extremely important!	Yes	Extremely important!	Yes, but RE-WORD IT	Extremely important, but RE-WORD IT	Yes
Contribution to the group	Yes	Yes	Yes	No clear answer	RE-WORD IT	RE-WORD IT	Yes
Emotional intelligence	Yes	Yes	Yes	Extremely important!	Yes, but RE-WORD IT	Yes	Yes
Supporting others	Yes	Yes	Yes	No clear answer	Yes, but RE-WORD IT	Yes, but RE-WORD IT (may be empathy?)	Yes
Flexibility	Yes	Yes	Yes	Extremely important!	Hugely important, more for followers	Yes	Yes
Motivation	Yes	Yes	You don't have to worry about teaching motivation as you can get people to get motivated on their own.	No clear answer	Very important, but might want to RE-WORD IT	Yes	Yes
Can F be taught?	Yes	Yes, but before they are taught, an awareness has to be raised speak	Yes, but the degree to which you can, I don't know.	Yes	Yes, but are some skills are more difficult to teach (Ex. Motivation)	Yes	I don't know. I teach about F.